

Homages from
the GBC



Anuttama Dāsa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In 2016, less than two years from now, the society you envisioned, created, built, and continue to guide, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), will celebrate its 50th anniversary.

In India the celebrations will begin in 2015 by marking the 50th anniversary of your departure for the West on the steamship *Jaladuta*. This will begin a historic, almost two-year opportunity to educate the world about your greatness and your great contributions; to increase our own appreciation for the mercy and gifts you have given us; and to inform the world about ISKCON's profound work toward the respiritualization of the entire human society.

The fact that ISKCON has survived is itself significant. Many religious communities crumble and die with the passing of their founder. ISKCON has, in fact, passed through difficult challenges since your departure. In my service to you as Communications Director and this year's GBC Chairman, I have witnessed many such obstacles and challenges to ISKCON.

Many of them, not unexpectedly, have come from within our society's own ranks. But in every instance, Śrīla Prabhupāda, if we remember the instructions you gave us, the moral and spiritual standards you set, and the example you provided, it becomes clear how to transcend our differences and work through our problems.

All of us, Śrīla Prabhupāda—your disciples, granddisciples, and our future generations—are but your feeble and flawed spiritual children. We are minute *jīvas*. We make mistakes. We are subject to pride, envy, lust for power, and sense gratification.

What protects us at every step, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is your love, your teachings, and your example. As I write this offering, I realize that what has likely kept ISKCON afloat is your incessant praying to Lord Kṛṣṇa on our behalf.

We are also protected by your order to work together, to cooperate for your pleasure and for the satisfaction of Lord Kṛṣṇa. This was perhaps your greatest practical instruction to us: Together we are strong, divided we are weak. As a bundle we remain unbroken, individually we are easily destroyed.

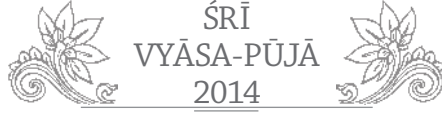
Śrīla Prabhupāda, please let us remember how dependent we are upon you, the Vaiṣṇavas, and the Lord in the heart. Please drive from our hearts the ignorance that deludes us into thinking we are the doers, the enjoyers, or the controllers. Let us constantly pray for your protection and guidance, lest we fall to the wayside in forgetfulness.

Yet, you are much more than our protector. It is a fact that Lord Kṛṣṇa invested in you special powers to spread His mission all over the world. He engaged you to reveal to the entire world, as was never done before, the playful Śrī Kṛṣṇa, cowherd boy of Vṛndāvana. He empowered you to spread the *yuga-dharma*, the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, all over the globe. He chose you to translate and comment upon the essential Vaiṣṇava literatures and make them available to millions. He empowered you to build a worldwide institution, one that is expanding, achieving new milestones every year, and maturing day by day.

I pray that in preparation for the 50th anniversary, we, as your instruments, will take stock of our humble position and your glorious position, and always remember your example and our dependence upon you.

Please bless us that the 50th anniversary will not be just a celebration of the past but a commitment to the future. Please bless us that this future will be one of heartfelt service to the Lord and to the world.

As you stated in the first of your "Seven Purposes of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness," we are meant



To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world.

I can conceive of nothing more glorious or more necessary for the world. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us hope. Thank you for giving us ISKCON. Thank you for giving us this great cause, to which we endeavor to surrender our entire lives.

Your aspiring servant,

Anuttama Dāsa

Badrinārāyaṇ Swami

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe
nirviṣeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

When you are standing on a mountain, you see only the scenery in front of you. You have no real sense of the mountain's scope and height. Only from a distance, when you are on the level ground of the plains below, do you get a true sense of how grand the mountain is.

We now have the benefit of the distance of time to look back at what Śrīla Prabhupāda accomplished—alone, at an elderly age, and in a foreign country.

Tarun Kanti Ghosh, a well-to-do newspaper publisher, came to visit Śrīla Prabhupāda in Kolkata. He had just been to see a yogī who allegedly had the *prāpti-siddhi*. The yogī had supposedly manifested an apple out of thin air, and Mr. Gosh was very impressed by the experience.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, although deeply humble by nature, replied as follows to help the man appreciate how a pure devotee, by Kṛṣṇa's grace, is the most powerful of yogīs.

I came to America with nothing but the holy name and faith in the order of my Guru Mahārāja. I sat down in a park and began to chant. From that chanting, so many devotees came, so many books came, so many festivals, so many beautiful Deities, and so many temples came. And in every temple there are so many apples.

T.K. Gosh was impressed by the manifestation of one apple, but in the face of all opposing odds, Śrīla Prabhupāda achieved the seemingly impossible by manifesting temples, devotees, books, Deities, and festivals all over the world. By any measure, this was a most amazing mystic accomplishment.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī writes in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 9.9, 18, 28)

The Lord brought the desire tree of devotional service to this earth and became its gardener. He sowed the seed and sprinkled upon it the water of His will.

The branches of the Caitanya tree formed a cluster or society, with great branches covering all the universe.

All the wealth in the three worlds cannot equal the value of one such nectarean fruit [from that tree] of devotional service.

There is no doubt that Śrīla Prabhupāda was the *senāpati-bhakta*, the great devotee general predicted to be sent by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to fulfill His desire—to form a society and spread its branches all over the world.

As for the value of the fruit of that tree, once a man asked Śrīla Prabhupāda to read his palm. To everyone's surprise, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Give me your hand." With expert theatrics, Śrīla Prabhupāda cupped the man's hand to see the lines, studying the matter carefully. Suddenly, he slapped the man's hand and said gravely "All bad—birth, death, disease, and old age." Śrīla Prabhupāda's mood was so somber that the man almost had a heart attack. Then, lightening the mood with a sweet smile, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "But clap your hands in a *kīrtana* and all the lines will go away." (Detroit, August 1975)

Simply by our chanting the holy name under the guidance of a pure devotee, all the lines of our misfortune go away and one tastes the sweetness of pure devotional service. Who can measure the value of such a fruit?

Śrīla Prabhupāda once said "I cannot think small." In the mood of Vāsudeva Datta and all great Vaiṣṇavas, he looked out at the conditioned souls of this world and thought, "Let them all be saved"—and he laid out the plans for how to do it. Again in Detroit, in the summer of 1975, he ordered, "I have given you the structure, just decorate it." He paused and then added, "Actually, I have also given you the decorations. Just go and hang them."

The *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.34) enjoins, "Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth." While we may have so many speculative ideas, *jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*: "the self-realized souls have seen the truth."

Seeing the need for a sane and stable society in order for the population of the world to peacefully take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Śrīla Prabhupāda laid out the structure. He said that the fiscal system should be based on the gold standard. The devotees were incredulous. They questioned, "But Śrīla Prabhupāda, how will the vast transactions required of our modern global economy be carried out using the gold standard?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda responded, "That is my point. They can't be."

Śrīla Prabhupāda told us to start farms, grow our own food, and show the example of a society based on *varṇāśrama* principles. Many of us thought these were quaint ideas wistfully looking back at a romanticized agrarian age—but impractical and undoable. At the bare minimum they were best left for some future generation of devotees to figure out how to actualize.

Yet with the distance of more some forty years, we can now see that Śrīla Prabhupāda was not looking back to an idealized past. Rather, he was prescient, seeing into the future on the basis of the *Bhāgavatam*.

The Western world has just barely survived "the great recession" and is teetering on the brink of the next one. We have a rapacious 1% of the population sapping the life out of the remaining 99%. Nobel-laureate economists are pointing out that the nations with the highest economic output (GNP) also have the highest rates of incarceration, school drop-outs, divorce, drug addiction, violent crime, suicide, and a whole range of other social ills.

Those in the second and third worlds feverishly aspire to come to the standard of living experienced by those in the first world. The problem is that the resources required to meet that level of worldwide consumption will take six planet earths. Now *there* is "an inconvenient truth." The numbers do not lie. It simply cannot be done.

All around us are people "living lives of quiet desperation." Clearly, to those with the eyes to see we have a model for the world that is impossible to achieve; it cannot be sustained, and it is not producing a happy, well-balanced population.

There is a groundswell of thoughtful people around the globe who are rethinking the current models. They are starting farms. They are seeking alternative economic systems. They are questioning the current

social roles. There are many people ripe to hear the message of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Rather than trying to blend in with the trends of the day, the members of ISKCON have a profound duty to present the vision given to us by Śrīla Prabhupāda, both in word and in deed. The people of the world are crying for it, now more than ever.

The *śāstra* directs:

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

“The real import of the scriptures is revealed only to one who has unflinching faith in both the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the spiritual master.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23)

In February of 1935 Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote this stanza as part of a poem offered to his own spiritual master on his Vyāsa-pūjā day:

Oh! my Master
The evangelic angel.
Give us thy light,
Light up thy candle.
Struggle for existence
A Human race,
The only hope
His Divine Grace.

As a lighthouse steers ships away from the shoals and into safe harbor, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words and vision are the beacon, the illuminating candle, meant to save the struggling human race.

To conclude, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave the secret to executing the mammoth task he expected of all of us:

We have nothing to manufacture, but simply carry the message as a faithful peon. That will be effective. One should be very sincere to his Spiritual Master and Kṛṣṇa simultaneously. Then everything comes out successful. [Letter to Jayapatāka, 17 April 1970]

Begging to become a humble servant,

Badrinārāyaṇ Swami

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

My dear lord and master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, who are saving the world through the *saṅkīrtana* movement. You are an ocean of mercy, receiving your supply from the great reservoir of causeless mercy, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself.

We just celebrated Rāma-navamī, and I have been thinking quite deeply about Lord Rāmacandra and His qualities, compared to those of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya. Of course, Lord Rāma is different in some important ways, being the Supreme Personality of Godhead who carefully follows rules and regulations. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord who displays amazing pastimes, and Lord Caitanya is the Supreme Lord in the

role of His own devotee displaying unlimited love for Himself.

There are some important characteristics the three Lords share, and one of them is mercy. Lord Caitanya is the most merciful, being *patita-pāvana*, and as such He stands out for His unparalleled mercy. But that doesn't mean that Kṛṣṇa is not merciful, or that Lord Rāma is not merciful. In Their own ways They are also merciful.

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.34) we find the following verse spoken by Lord Rāmacandra, quoted from the *Rāmāyaṇa* (*Yuddha-kāṇḍa* 18.33):

*sakṛd eva praṇanno yas tavāsmīti ca yācate
abhayaṁ sarvadā tasmai dadāmy etad vratam mama*

“It is My vow that if one only once seriously surrenders unto Me, saying ‘My dear Lord, from this day I am Yours,’ and prays to Me for courage, I shall immediately award courage to that person, and he will always remain safe from that time on.”

So Lord Rāma is merciful, and so is Lord Kṛṣṇa, but when it comes to mercy Lord Caitanya is in a class of His own, and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are right there with Him, delivering the fallen and impossible souls of this Kali-yuga. We know very vividly that if you had not come to the West in 1965 we would have been hopelessly lost.

Speaking for myself, I can say that my situation was just too bad. I had no future, and everything was totally inauspicious. But you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, entered my life uninvited (at least by me), and turned everything upside down in wonderful ways. I quickly saw that all my anxieties were completely insubstantial, and that I actually had so much to live for. Since then it has only been getting better and better, despite my shortcomings.

So this is all your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I remain totally dependent on you. Please be kind enough to keep me engaged in your service some way or other, and in this way keep me in the shade of your lotus feet.

Your most fallen servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

Bhakti Chāru Swami

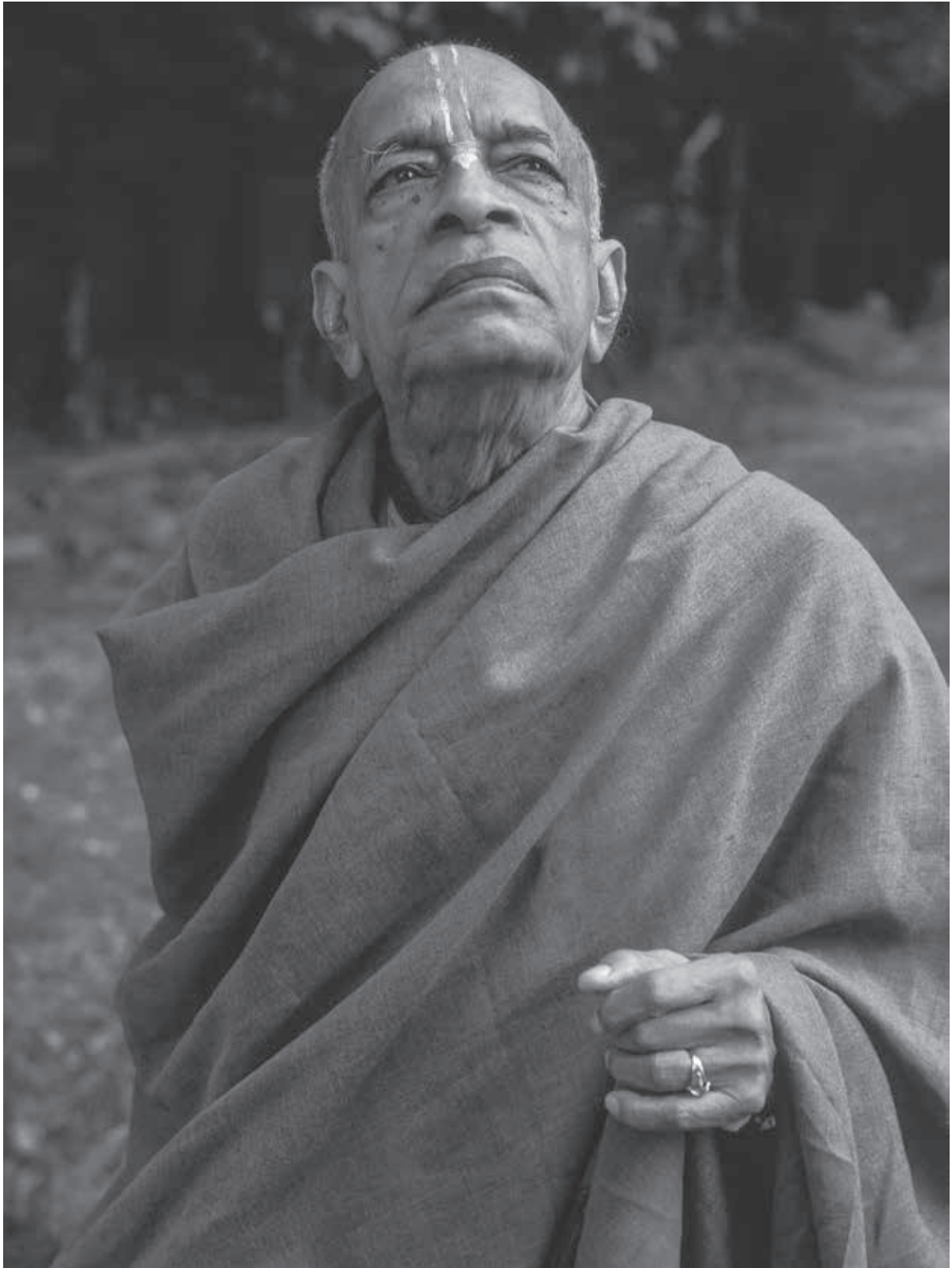
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet, which are my eternal shelter.

Today I want to inform you about a glorious achievement. This year we have successfully established and permanently secured your position in ISKCON as its founder-*ācārya*. For many years many of us in ISKCON were seriously thinking about this need, and finally through the authority structure of the GBC body, we have been able to establish your position in ISKCON as its spiritual head for all time.

You often said that to effectively preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world there is need for an institution, and through our practical experience we realized that to hold that institution together and make it function effectively we need Your Divine Grace as its permanent head, along with a governing body to collectively manage its affairs.

Ever since your departure we have faced many, many difficulties. You yourself cautioned us that after an *ācārya* leaves the planet there will inevitably be crises. How could we expect that after the disappearance of an *ācārya* like Your Divine Grace we would not face any crises? However, we also noticed that just by putting



Your Divine Grace in the center we could overcome those difficulties quite easily. We began to realize that it is our love for you that will hold us together and enable this movement to sail through troubled waters. Through those difficulties we realized that the secret of success lay in establishing your position as the founder-*ācārya* of this glorious ISKCON institution.

Eventually, in 2006, the GBC decided to strategically establish your position in ISKCON by forming a subcommittee called “The Śrīla Prabhupāda Position Committee.” For seven years we, the members of that committee, met twice a year to discuss how to formally and effectively establish your unique position in ISKCON and thus fulfill the prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Finally, after profound deliberation and extensive research, Ravīndra Svarūpa Prabhu has brilliantly written a book called *Śrīla Prabhupāda—The Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON*. Before final publication, the book was scrutinized by all GBC members and scholarly devotees of our movement, and after we had taken their thoughtful input into consideration, the book was printed and has been authorized by the GBC body as an official position paper of ISKCON.

Now we want to distribute this book all over the world to educate the devotees about their relationship with you as the principal spiritual factor for their spiritual progress. In this way, all the members of ISKCON should become joyfully aware that all their relationships in ISKCON are centered around you. The devotees of ISKCON, generation after generation, will see you as their preeminent *śikṣā-guru*, and thus your teachings will be the guiding factor for all. In fact, everyone can see that this has *already* become a reality: all the *Bhāgavatam* classes in the temples are conducted on the basis of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and the *Gītā* classes are based on your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. Your books and teachings are the very foundation of our movement. Who could ever fail to recognize that?

The book by Ravīndra Svarūpa Prabhu has inspired sincere devotees so much that they have started to consider how to implement its purpose in a practical way. For example, during the last GBC meeting Jayapatāka Mahārāja proposed that when a devotee decides to seriously take up the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness by chanting sixteen rounds and following the four regulative principles, he should commit himself to you through some official ceremony that will also include a fire sacrifice.

Sometimes devotees express their concern that too much glorification of Your Divine Grace may foster a misconception that your position is on the same level as that of the Supreme Lord, which is a deviant philosophy that you very much resented. But we do not see the propagation of such a philosophy as a realistic possibility in ISKCON because through your books and lectures you have given us a crystal clear understanding of the position of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. According to my perception, the misunderstanding that developed in the early days of ISKCON, which you considered the result of a conspiracy, arose because the devotees at that time did not have the depth of spiritual understanding to discriminate between *viṣṇu-tattva* and *jīva-tattva*. Now that ISKCON has become firmly established on the solid ground of a very clear spiritual understanding of *sambandha-jñāna*, that possibility is extremely remote.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, today I feel very happy that we have been able to systematically establish your position in ISKCON as its founder-*ācārya* for as long as ISKCON exists. Although you wanted this concept to be firmly established in ISKCON, you did not want it for your personal aggrandizement but for the benefit of the entire world. We have seen that in the past the Gauḍīya Maṭh fell apart because its leaders failed to keep Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in the center as its founder-*ācārya* and thus disregarded his prime directive to manage the institution collectively under a GBC. If they had, then you would not have had to create your own institution. You would have been happy functioning as a member of that glorious institution. It was extremely unfortunate that the Gauḍīya Maṭh had to go that way, but through the mistake of those devotees we learned the real secret of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness most effectively all over the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please continue to bless us so that we can remain as your loyal servants in your ISKCON and become effectively engaged in fulfilling the prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Your humble servant eternally,

Bhakti Chāru Swami

Bhaktimārga Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

There are many moods projected about you,
Reflected in pics, so many, not few.
They are diverse colors of a true saint
That are captured by camera or brush with paint.

Moods of gravity, solidity, and weight,
The serious look that defines the great.
Moods of lightness, moments of humor,
Of laughter, jokes, and human candor.

My favorite photos are of your smile.
They inspire and push for the extra mile.
They lure and lock in an eager soul
Who's on a search for the ultimate goal.

You say, "The face is the index of the mind."
The exterior can determine the kind.
Dare I judge the face, Your Divine Grace?
Yet I presume purity rests at that place.

You profile as a master, scholar, or king,
A general, a warrior, the spirit of Narasingh.
Paradoxically, you've shown your ability
To portray a servant in all humility.

There are images of you in reverent prayer.
Those are the stills not really so rare—
Images of concern for us as we go
On a hobble or a crawl and move so slow.

I like the pics when you enjoyed the play.
It was in New York at the end of one day.
Kṛṣṇa eloped with the grand princess,
Rukmiṇī, being the damsel in distress.

It was drama that brought you some delight
As actor princes put up a good fight.
Your viewing the play is precious indeed,
An impression that waters the *bhakti* seed.



There are action shots of your teaching and talking—
Action shots of reading and walking.
They are signatures, brands, trademarks—
Images that pull us out of the dark.

Grateful are we for those generous poses
That strike the heart like petals of roses.
One frozen moment of your deep contemplation
Leaves us with a piece for worthy conversation.

Your humble servant,

Bhaktimārga Swami

Bhaktivaibhava Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Kindly accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

To fulfill the previous *ācāryas*' desire and the desire of your own Guru Mahārāja for a united worldwide preaching organization, you founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness as a distinct branch of the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava-sampradāya. You are therefore the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON.

If we carefully study each of your steps in founding and managing ISKCON, we can see that you meticulously fulfilled every desire of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura. Out of utter necessity you created the environment to be able to serve the instructions and desires of your Guru Mahārāja.

As founder-*ācārya*, your writings, oral teachings, and exemplary actions remain the permanent and irreplaceable basis for all subsequent teachings and activities of ISKCON. You are and will remain always the instructing spiritual master of all devotees in ISKCON.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the foundational *śikṣā-guru* for all ISKCON devotees because you realized and presented the teachings of the previous *ācāryas* of the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya-sampradāya appropriately for the modern age.

Your instructions are the essential teachings for every ISKCON devotee. Your books are the embodiment of your teachings and must be accepted as the standard by all present and future generations of ISKCON.

There is an ongoing need to properly understand your position, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All members of ISKCON, for all time, have to recognize your extraordinary spiritual status as the founder-*ācārya*—for their own good, for the good of the society, and for the benefit of the entire world. As the people of the world become aware of your incredible achievements, they will admit without a doubt that you are one of the greatest and most important personalities of all times. The more people recognize your greatness, the more they will follow your instructions and make factual advancement in spiritual life by taking shelter of the holy name.

mahā-bhāgavata nityam kalau saṅkīrtya keśavam

“In Kali-yuga the hallmark of a *mahā-bhāgavata*, the most elevated devotee, is that he chants the holy name of the Lord constantly. (*Skanda Purāṇa*)

It is the greatest responsibility of all ISKCON members to firmly establish Your Divine Grace as the

founder-*ācārya* and predominant *śikṣā-guru* of ISKCON, not only by words but in their daily practice as well.

Your eternal servant,

Bhaktivaibhava Swami

Bhūrijana Dāsa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

Your words descend from the spiritual realm, and they pierce the ignorance covering material consciousness, as the dawning sun and rising moon pierce the darkness of night.

In a 1966 New York *Bhagavad-gītā* lecture you teach by narrating the determination Dhruva Mahārāja possessed that attracted the mercy of Kṛṣṇa:

Oh, he at once went to the forest. Then he was asking the tiger, “Oh, you are God?” The elephant, “You are God?” In this way, when Nārāyaṇa saw, “Oh, this boy is very much inquisitive,” so He sent Nārada that “Go and see what is the condition of this boy.”

So Nārada came. Nārada is the agent of God. “My dear boy, you are royal . . . You belong to the royal family. You cannot suffer all this penance and austerity. Please go back to your home. Your father is very much anxious for you. Your mother is very much anxious for you.”

The boy said, “My dear sir, you don’t try to dissuade me in that way. If you know something about God, how can I see God, then tell me. Otherwise you go away. Don’t disturb me.” So he was firmly determined.

Now, this boy was initiated by Nārada. When he saw that “This boy is determined,” then he initiated him and gave him mantra, that *namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*. He chanted that mantra and became perfect, and God came before him.

You charm in Hamburg in 1969, even while condemning modern civilization’s avoidance of life’s true problems:

Vedic civilization, unless one is inquisitive for the solution of the problems, he is not on the human being standard. Because there are so many problems. The animals cannot inquire, but a man can inquire. So unless one comes to this point, to inquire how these problems can be solved, he’s not developed to human consciousness. He’s still in the animal consciousness.

Just like the rabbits. The rabbits, when they face one hunter and it understands that “Now my life is in danger,” he closes his eyes. He thinks that “The problem is now solved.” [laughs] And peacefully he is killed. [laughs] You see?

Similarly, the problems are there, but we are closing our eyes: “Oh, there is no problem. We are very happy.” That’s it. [laughter] So this is called *māyā*. The problem is not solved, but they are thinking their problem is solved by closing the eyes. That’s all.

And you faithfully offer Kṛṣṇa’s solution to all who’ll listen:

Now, here is the solution of problem, as Kṛṣṇa says in the fourteenth verse, Seventh Chapter, of *Bhagavad-gītā*: “It is very difficult to surmount the problems offered by the laws of material nature, but one who surrenders unto Me, he overcomes.” Therefore we are teaching this Kṛṣṇa consciousness to solve the problems of life. It is not sentiment or fanaticism or any sectarian religion. It is a fact that if you want to solve the problems of life, you have to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. There is no other alternative.

In the storefront in 1966 you speak about a devotee’s forbearing mood in approaching his Lord:

The soul and the Supersoul, both of them are sitting together. And God knows everything about me. So I do not require to pray from God to get me out of this distress. He knows everything. Why shall I pray? He leaves everything to God. He does not pray. He prays . . . , he prays to glorify the God, “How great You are,” not for his personal interest. . . . Even if he is distressed, he says, “O Lord, it is Your kindness. You have put me in distress just to rectify me. I would have been put into more and more, thousand times, in distress, but You are giving me little. That’s all. That is Your great mercy.” That is his vision. He’s not disturbed. A person who is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he doesn’t care for all this material distress or insult or honor, because he is aloof from this.

In the same talk you advise:

Reciprocal. If you love Kṛṣṇa, then Kṛṣṇa will love more than you. . . . What capacity you have got to love Kṛṣṇa? But Kṛṣṇa will love. He has got immense capacity.

In 1969 in Hamburg, the honey of your own relationship with Kṛṣṇa flows from your tongue. Your words attract:

The devotee, he does not know anything beyond God, and God also does not know anything beyond His devotee. So sweet relation. God is always after me, as we have discussed many times, that He is sitting in the same tree, in this heart. I am sitting, and my friend, God, is also sitting, Supersoul, eternally. Wherever I am taking my transmigration, when I leave this body and enter into another body, God also goes there just to see what I am doing. When I shall turn my face towards Him—He is simply waiting. And as soon as I turn my face towards God, oh, He says, “My dear son, come on.” *Sa ca mama priyaḥ*. Lord says, “You are eternally dear to Me. Now you are turning your face to Me. So I am very glad.”

An English boy asks you: “Is it possible for one to make it in this [one] life?” Your answer is philosophical, yet it nevertheless surprises:

It is possible in one second, provided you are serious. It is not difficult. . . . This world is relative world. There is no such formula that “One can be Kṛṣṇa conscious after so many years.” No. There is no such formula. One cannot become Kṛṣṇa conscious even millions after . . . , births, and one can become within second Kṛṣṇa conscious. But on the other edge, within this life we can become perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness if we take it seriously. Especially you are all young boys. We expect at least you’ll live for fifty years more. Oh, that is sufficient time. Sufficient. More than sufficient.

More than sufficient. If for fifty years one chants simply Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, he is sure to become perfect. There is no doubt about it. Simply if you chant this mantra, Hare Kṛṣṇa, oh, there is no doubt about it.

Your response to a young German devotee's comment is personal and realized:

Devotee: I know so many people, young people, that when they see us chanting on the street, I can see it in their eyes that they really want to chant also, but something is stopping them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is *māyā*. *Māyā* is there. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, "The *māyā* is very strong." But if you capture Kṛṣṇa very, more strongly, then *māyā* cannot do anything. If something is opposing your chanting, then you'll have to chant more loudly: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. So you defeat *māyā*. The medicine is the same. At least, I do so. When I am in some danger, I chant Hare Kṛṣṇa loudly. Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ [laughter] Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. That's all.

At times, even during those early days, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you revealed secrets of your success. Again at the New York storefront:

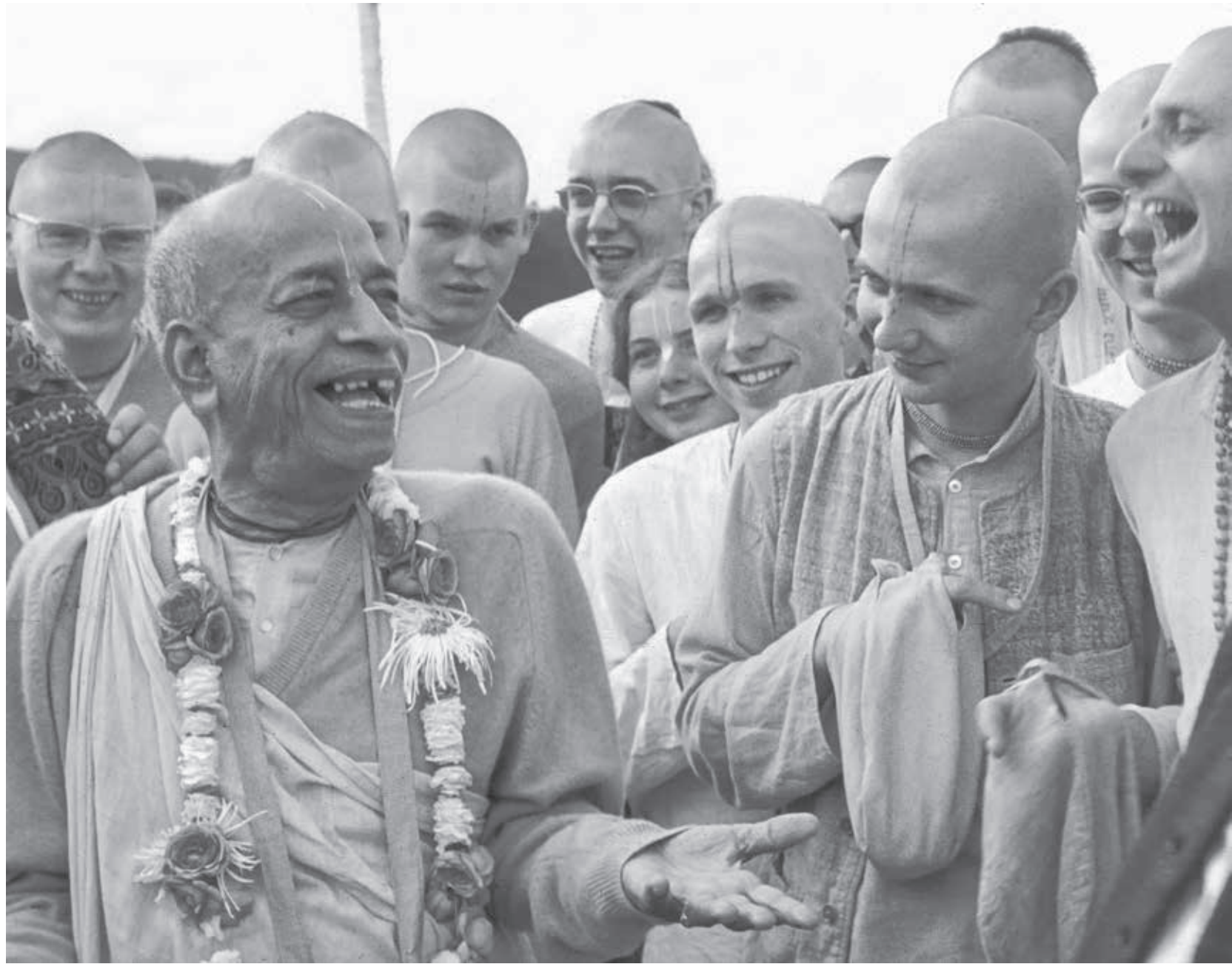
Just like my residence is at Vṛndāvana. That is the place of Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa advented Himself, He was there. So now I am in America, in your country, but that does not mean that [I am] out of Vṛndāvana. Because if I think of Kṛṣṇa always, so it is as good I am in India, in Vṛndāvana. . . . The consciousness is there. So Kṛṣṇa consciousness means you already live with Kṛṣṇa in that spiritual planet. Simply you have to wait for giving up this body.

And as always, from the early New York lectures until your final days in this world, you taught us how to chant Kṛṣṇa's holy names:

Now, this is Sanskrit word. Some of you do not know what is the meaning of this Hare Kṛṣṇa. This meaning of Hare Kṛṣṇa is . . . It is just addressing the Supreme Lord and His energy, Harā. Harā is the energy, and Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. So we are addressing, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa: "O the energy of the Lord, O the Lord, please accept me." That's all. "Please accept me." We have no other prayer. "Please accept me." Lord Caitanya taught that we should simply cry, and we shall simply pray for accepting us. That's all. So this vibration is simply a cry for addressing the Supreme Lord, requesting Him, "Please accept me. Please accept me."

And in teaching us to seek shelter in Kṛṣṇa's names, you delivered the same ancient wisdom that reverses the unlikelihood of spiritual advancement amidst the contaminating Age of Kali:

So this is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Ananya-cetāḥ satataṁ yo māṁ smarati. Smarati* means remember. *Nityaśaḥ*, continually. *Tasyāhaṁ sulabhaḥ pārtha*. "Oh, I am very cheap for them." Kṛṣṇa becomes very cheap commodity. The highest valuable thing becomes very cheap for him who takes this process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Tasyāhaṁ sulabhaḥ pārtha nitya-yuktasya yoginaḥ*: "Because he's continually engaged in such process of yoga, *bhakti-yoga*, oh, I am very cheap. I am easily available. I am easily available." Now, Kṛṣṇa declares Himself that He becomes easily available by this process. Why should I try for any, I mean to say, very hard job? Why shall I take to that? We chant Hare Kṛṣṇa: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, and twenty-four hours you can chant. There is no rules and regulation. Either in the street or in the subway, or at your home, or in your office, oh, there is no tax, no expenses. Why don't you do it? Always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.



Your words were always potent, deep, and realized; mine remain forever shallow. My hope, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is that you will kindly allow me to serve you through serving your spoken and written words.

Your servant,

Bhūrijana Dāsa

Bīr Krishna dās Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.12.1) we find instructions regarding *brahmacārī* training:

*śrī-nārada uvāca
brahmacārī guru-kule vasan dānto guror hitam
ācaran dāsavan nīco gurau sudṛḍha-sauhṛdaḥ*

“Nārada Muni said: A student should practice completely controlling his senses. He should be submissive and should have an attitude of firm friendship for the spiritual master. With a great vow, the *brahmacārī* should live at the *guru-kula* only for the benefit of the guru.”

This verse is applicable not only for young *brahmacārīs* but for all the members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

Guru-kula literally means “the residence of the guru.” Wherever one lives in this world, one should first of all understand that it is your residence, Śrīla Prabhupāda. What that means is that it belongs to you and should be arranged for your service, to please you. This applies regardless of what *āśrama* one is situated in.

Dāntaḥ you translate as “continuously practicing control of the senses.” Control of the senses means engaging them always in your service, in expanding the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, and in progressing on the path of purification so that we can be fit instruments in your service.

Guroḥ hitam means “to please the spiritual master.” Every activity we engage in should be expressly for this purpose. Whenever we have decisions to make, we should ask ourselves, “What would please Śrīla Prabhupāda the most?” and then take that course of action as our first priority.

Ācaran means “to practice.” But what should we practice? *Dāsavat nīcaḥ*, which you translate as “very humbly, like a slave, submissive, obedient.” You once stated that the *kañṭhī-mālā* we wear is like a dog collar. Just as a dog is obsequious to its master, we should act in relation to you. *Obsequious* means “always desiring to please.”

We should be ready to do any service you ask us to do. We should never think a menial service is beneath us. This means we are required to throw away all pride. According to Caitanya Mahāprabhu, this is the prerequisite for chanting the holy name constantly and without offense.

Finally, we are advised to have an attitude of firm friendship for the spiritual master. You are our real well-wisher. When I first met you in Gainesville, Florida, I was overwhelmed by your mood of caring. For the



first time I met someone who had no personal interest but was only interested in the welfare of everyone.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that I may live my life always acting in accordance with this verse. This verse is meant not simply for those in the *brahmacārī āśrama*. It is meant to instruct all who wish to reach the transcendental realm of Vraja.

Your eternal servant,

Bir Krishna dās Goswami

Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thirty-seven years past your disappearance, as your ISKCON approaches its fiftieth anniversary, I am still awed, amazed, and fascinated.

First, your vision for salvaging humanity and repositioning it on track for genuine progress:

Despite my decades of thorough mundane studies and then intensive global travels, I have never encountered a vision more attractive, comprehensive, and pregnant with effectiveness—in short, an all-embracing plan for transforming human society that can actually get the impossible job done.

Second, concentrated application:

I like to say that you are “the master of the focus.” You know how to scoop up the energies of conditioned souls and, despite potential intricacies and divergences along the way, focus us on achieving your goals.

Third, the pinnacle of insight:

When I attempt to describe your divine powers of penetration and discernment, the words that come to mind are spiritual perspicacity, acuity, and prescience. How to see what you see? The priceless insights you convey in your lectures and books astound me—since the first page of your books I turned forty years ago, until now, when I continue to wonder at the depths still awaiting me.

Finally, your deliverables, the take-aways:

As a little boy in church, one of my favorite songs was “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth.”

For my insignificant attempts at service, you offer the highest reward—back to Godhead—however you arrange for the devotional service to go on.

Aspiring to be your unconditional servant,

Devāmrita Swami

Dīna Sharaṇā Devī Dāsī

Another year has passed,
And again
I am falling on my knees
At your lotus feet
On your glorious appearance day.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my father, my master, my savior,
Please accept my most fallen obeisances.

Last year,
In my spiritual naivete,
I dared utter Queen Kuntī's prayer—

“May calamities fall upon me
Again and again
So I may be able to serve you more sincerely.”

Maybe I did not quite believe
The Supreme Personality of Godhead
Would hear me say

“Please remove *all* obstacles from me
So I may serve you more deeply.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my father, my master, my savior,
... The Supreme Personality heard me ...
... And calamities fell upon me. ...
... However, due to attachment my faith failed me. ...

I wished I could have disappeared from the surface of this earth,
I wished I could have entered the stormy waters at Purī,
I wished I could have been the old woman with leprosy,
I wished I could have been the young girl
Whose body was being devoured
By the crematory's blazing fire,
Leaving only ashes behind.

Instead,
... I fell into the deep dark well of my broken heart, ...
... To find only an ocean of tears. ...

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my father, my master, my savior,
... Words are failing me. ...

Last year,
In my still unshaken faith,



I formulated the following words:

“Those who have served you over the years
In all corners of this earth,
Condemned in the ocean of material enjoyment,
Are praying for relief from the clutches
Of repeated birth and death. ...

They know
That if they simply pray
At the lotus feet
Of the pure devotee—

You,

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda—

Their prayers will be heard
And their lives will be transformed,
So that they will serve you only
For the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Although I never stopped attending to the duties
Of my family, my husband, and your mission,
From the deep dark well of my broken heart,
As I prayed incessantly again and again,
I thought you,

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my father, my master, my savior,
... Were not answering me. ...

... And I sank ever deeper into the dark well of my broken heart, ...
... Only to find an even greater ocean of tears. ...

Last year,
In my still unbroken loyalty,
I wrote the following words:

“As the thread invisible to the eye keeps the pearls in a row, ...
Without which there would be no beautiful necklace, ...

You,

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Continue to us give us mercy and blessings.
This is the underlying fabric by which we are able to serve
For the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. ...”

From the deep dark well of my broken heart,
As I prayed incessantly,
Every day,
Standing from the distance at Jagannātha’s temple gate, ...
Patita Pāvana overflowed me with His glance
... And I began to drink His nectar. ...

In the temple where Lord Caitanya use to spend the night,
I fell on my knees every evening,



As I was asking forgiveness for all my sins.
Amidst the drums and the mantras to Nṛsiṃhadev,
I began to feel relief from my feverish mind.

Imperceptibly
The nectar of Lord Caitanya's blessings
Began to feel like balsam on my broken heart.

I began to understand that you,
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my father, my master, my savior,
... Had heard me. ...

One evening
Chakravarty Prabhu read from *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*ātmendriya-prīti-vāñchā—tāre bali 'kāma'
kṛṣṇendriya-prīti-icchā dhare 'prema' nāma*

“The desire to gratify one's own senses is *kāma* (lust),
But the desire to please the senses of Lord Kṛṣṇa is *prema* (love).”

*sarvathā dhvaṃsa-rahitaṃ saty apī dhvaṃsa-kāraṇe
yad bhāva-bandhanaṃ yūnoḥ sa premā parikīrtitaḥ*

“If there is ample reason for the dissolution of a conjugal relationship
And yet such a dissolution does not take place,
Such a relationship of intimate love is called pure.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my father, my master, my savior,
... I fall at your lotus feet ...
And beg you to forgive me for leaving your shelter for the past two years.
May this calamity help me to never leave your shelter ever again.

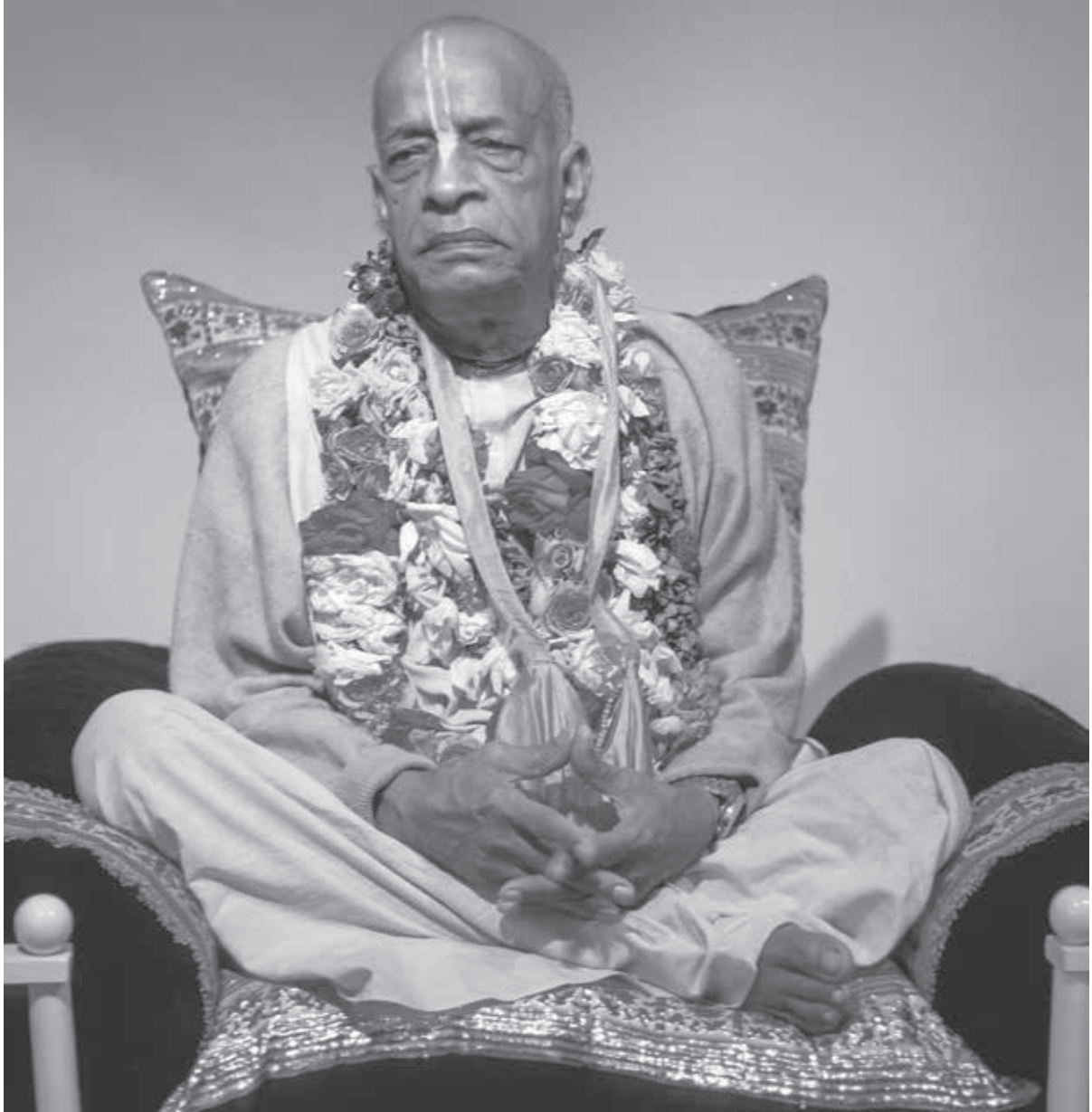
As I wrote last year,

“May I always remain an instrument in your hands;
May you,
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,
Use me to your heart's content ...
For your pleasure and the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my father, my master, my savior,
... In my spiritual fervor ...
I dare utter Queen Kuntī's prayers again
So I may be able to serve you more sincerely.

Your fallen servant,

Dīna Sharaṇā Devī Dāsī



Giridhārī Swami

Sincerity

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Many times, throughout your teachings, you mention that sincerity is an essential component for advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You say sincerity is necessary to first come in contact with the spiritual master.

Mr. O’Grady: The problem is to find this spiritual master.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is not the problem. The problem is whether you are sincere. You have problems, but God is within your heart. *Īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām*. God is not far away. If you are sincere, God sends you a spiritual master. Therefore God is also called *caitya-guru*, the spiritual master within the heart. God helps from within and from without. Everything is thus described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. This material body is like a machine, but within the heart is the soul, and with the soul is the Supersoul, Kṛṣṇa, who gives directions. The Lord says, “You wanted to do this; now here is the chance. Go and do it.” If you are sincere, you say, “Now, God, I want You.” Then He will give you directions. “Yes, now you come and get Me like this.” This is His kindness. However, if we want something else, that is all right. We can have it. God is very kind. When I want something, He is in my heart directing me and telling me how to have it. So why should He not give directions on how to have a spiritual master? First of all we must again be eager to revive our God consciousness. Then God will give us a spiritual master. [*The Science of Self-Realization*, Chapter 7e: “An Awareness of What Is Best and Most Beautiful”]

You also mention that sincerity in serving the spiritual master is equally important:

One can achieve the ultimate success of going back to Godhead if he is favored by the Lord’s sending His true representative. As soon as a true representative of the Lord is met by a devotee of the Lord, the devotee is assured a guarantee for going back to Godhead just after leaving the present body. This, however, depends on the sincerity of the devotee himself. The Lord is seated in the heart of all living beings, and thus he knows very well the movements of all individual persons. As soon as the Lord finds that a particular soul is very eager to go back to Godhead, the Lord at once sends His bona fide representative. The sincere devotee is thus assured by the Lord of going back to Godhead. The conclusion is that to get the assistance and help of a bona fide spiritual master means to *receive the direct help of the Lord Himself*. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.19.36, purport, italics in original]

These quotes and others like them raise the question: How does a disciple become truly sincere? On one occasion you answered this question by saying, “You become sincere by being sincere.”

I have often pondered this simple answer of yours. You seem to mean that we all have within our reach the ability to follow your instructions, and it is our choice whether to follow or not. But as the years wear on, I become painfully aware that there are many instructions of yours that I have chosen not to follow. This is evinced by the fact that advancement toward pure devotional service is very slow. It is obvious that a half-hearted attempt will not suffice.

Recently, one of my dear godbothers told me about the origins of the word *sincere*. The English word *sincere* comes from the Latin *sine cera*, meaning “without wax.” Apparently, during the time of the Roman Empire certain unscrupulous sculptors would wax over cracks and other imperfections in their marble sculptures to hide them. The trick would make the sculpture look flawless. This was a pretense. To the eye the sculpture appeared smooth, but beneath the surface it was false and inferior. Savvy buyers were looking for

sculptures made of *sine cera* marble, without wax covering the imperfections. They wanted marble that was clean, pure, and not falsified.

In a similar way, all my endeavors to follow your instructions must be unadulterated and without pretense. Since I do not possess that level of sincerity, my only hope is to get it from those who do.

During the past year I have experienced the purifying effect of associating with my godbrothers at various times and places—particularly in the *dhāma*. By being near them, and seeing how sincere they are in chanting the holy name, discussing *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, and following your other instructions, I too have developed a stronger desire to do the same. I am far from their level of sincerity, but with their association I now have hope of following in their footsteps.

My resolution is to take each and every opportunity to associate with dear godbrothers and imbibe from them the level of sincerity that you desired. I pray that you will bless me with the association of such great souls often and thus show me the way of becoming truly sincere in your service.

Your humble servant,

Giridhārī Swami

Gopāl Krishna Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most revered and auspicious day, I beg to offer my most fallen obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

I have to admit that I feel totally unqualified to write this Vyāsa-pūjā offering. Due to my contamination, I am unable to fully describe your achievements and glories.

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

Lord Caitanya predicted that the holy name would one day be chanted in every town and village of the world. Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda and your Guru Mahārāja had full faith that this prediction would come true. Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda foretold that a powerful *senāpati-bhakta* would soon appear to realize Lord Caitanya’s prediction. You are that powerful *senāpati-bhakta* who worked tirelessly to take the holy name to every corner of the globe. You had full faith in the instructions of your spiritual master. Although you had to undergo so many difficulties in India and abroad, you were determined to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness for the benefit of suffering humanity. You opened ISKCON centers around the world and translated the Vedic texts.

Due to your purity and the hard work of your followers, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is continuing to expand in many parts of the world. Once when someone asked you if you could do any magic, you said “No.” But then you said, “One magic I have done is that I have converted so many *mlecchas* into *brāhmaṇas*.” No other preacher could have achieved this in Kali-yuga.

You never compromised the philosophy. Because of your purity you were able to attract thousands of conditioned souls to the path of pure devotional service. You were always humble and gentle in dealing with others. You gave the medicine by which the suffering humanity can be cured—the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

You often stated that as long as book distribution goes on you would live forever. Through your Bhakti-vedanta purports you are continuing to preach to the conditioned souls. Like Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, you

have converted so many atheists and impersonalists to the path of devotional service. Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhakti-vinoda stated that a Vaiṣṇava is recognized by his preaching work. I regularly meet devotees who came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness because of your books. Your books will continue to preach for the next ten thousand years.

By your personal example you showed how a devotee should be engaged in serving the Lord. Once when you were unwell and devotees were advising you to rest and recuperate, you stated, “Please don’t take away my privilege to struggle for Kṛṣṇa.” Even when doctors advised you to slow down, you never stopped preaching and translating.

You established ISKCON in 1966, and we are going to celebrate the golden jubilee or 50th anniversary of ISKCON in 2016. Devotees all over the world are making plans to highlight your achievements. Here in Delhi we are planning a major program at the prestigious Vigyana Bhavan. We plan to invite the president or the prime minister of the country and other important dignitaries. At the opening of the Pune temple in 2013, the president of India praised ISKCON and you. We are also planning other programs across India that will highlight your achievements.

Before you went abroad you had rented a room at the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple in Chippiwada, Delhi. This room was your residence in Delhi for many years. You translated part of the First Canto in this room. You also used this room as a storage room for your books and as your Delhi office. Due to your causeless mercy, after negotiating for nearly thirty-seven years ISKCON Delhi has finally taken possession of this temple. Now it is fully under ISKCON Delhi’s management. In 1977 you personally instructed me that if we ever got control of this temple we should set up a reading room for your books there. We will soon fulfill this instruction. Regular temple programs are going on at this ancient temple, and we are about to start renovating it. Some neighbors still remember you, and almost everyone who does said they served you when you resided here. They are very happy that your institution is now running the temple where you spent considerable time.

On this auspicious day, I pray for your causeless mercy so that I may always remain fixed in executing your divine instructions and helping to propagate Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Your insignificant servant,

Gopāl Krishna Goswami

Guru Prasād Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet, whose dust continues to purify the entire world. All glories to your service, which constantly spreads to immerse countless living entities in *kṛṣṇa-sevā*.

In my continuing effort to glorify you as the perfection of the twenty-six qualities of a pure Vaiṣṇava, this year we will contemplate on how you are *vijita-ṣaḍ-guṇa*: “victorious over the six material qualities of lust, anger, greed, illusion, enviousness and hunger and thirst.”

The tongue is the most voracious of all the senses, yet you meditated on each morsel of *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* as Kṛṣṇa Himself, teaching us the meaning of honoring *prasādam*. You employed anger as an instrument to teach, train, and instruct devotees in what to do and what not to do. As soon as the lesson was complete, you withdrew your thunderbolt potency and smiled as sweetly as a rose. If you detected any disturbance in the chastized devotee’s mind, you would say, “It is my duty to teach you.” Who else could control these impulses to such a degree? In circumstances where anger would normally arise, you remained serene, as when you stepped on a thumb tack and nonchalantly removed it from your foot without even a wince. And while using anger

to instruct, you did so in a graduated way: slightly manifested at foolishness, more intense when there was neglect and carelessness, and very strong if there was refusal to act or direct disobedience. Thus *śāstra* has described your employment of anger: *santa evāsya chindanti mano-vyāsaṅgam uktibhiḥ*. “Saintly persons cut off the attachments of the mind with sharp words.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.26.26)

I find that your freedom from our six enemies was uniquely manifest in your person, enabling you to lift others from their grip. Totally free from illusion, you freed the world from the illusion of sense gratification, egotism, and impersonalism. Your teachings rid the mind of all vestiges of lust and desire. Your own example of utilizing everything for Kṛṣṇa gradually released our hearts from the grip of envy. Since you were free of envy, you could challenge and chastize anyone, even very proud or dignified persons, and they would not take offense. Your freedom from ego and envy was most perfectly displayed when you declined to take credit for your peaching accomplishments but rather declared that your Guru Mahārāja had sent all of us to assist you in your service to him.

Even madness was completely under your control: you were mad after Kṛṣṇa. You are the personification of what Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura describes in a song in *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*:

‘kāma’ kṛṣṇa-karmārpaṇe, ‘krodha’ bhakta-dveṣī jane,
‘lobha’ sādhu-saṅge hari-kathā
‘moha’ iṣṭa-lābha vine, ‘mada’ kṛṣṇa-guṇa-gāne,
niyukta kariba yathā tathā.

“I will engage lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, envy, and pride in appropriate ways, and by defeating these enemies I will feel happiness in my heart as I peacefully worship Govinda. I will engage lust by offering it in Kṛṣṇa’s service. Anger I will direct toward those who are envious of the devotees. I will be greedy to hear the topics of Hari in the association of devotees. I will feel illusioned without achieving my worshipable Lord. I will be maddened while singing the glories of Kṛṣṇa. In this way I will engage these enemies properly.”

Rūpa Goswāmī states in the first verse of *Upadeśāmṛta* that one who can control the six urges associated with the six enemies mentioned above can preach all over the world. That you preached and continue to preach everywhere on this planet is testimony to your victory over all these urges.

I can only beg you to empower me with a slight degree of your transcendental potency so I can fully control these longings and serve your ardent desire that others can do the same and find peace and happiness in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Your aspiring servant,

Guru Prasād Swami

Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa

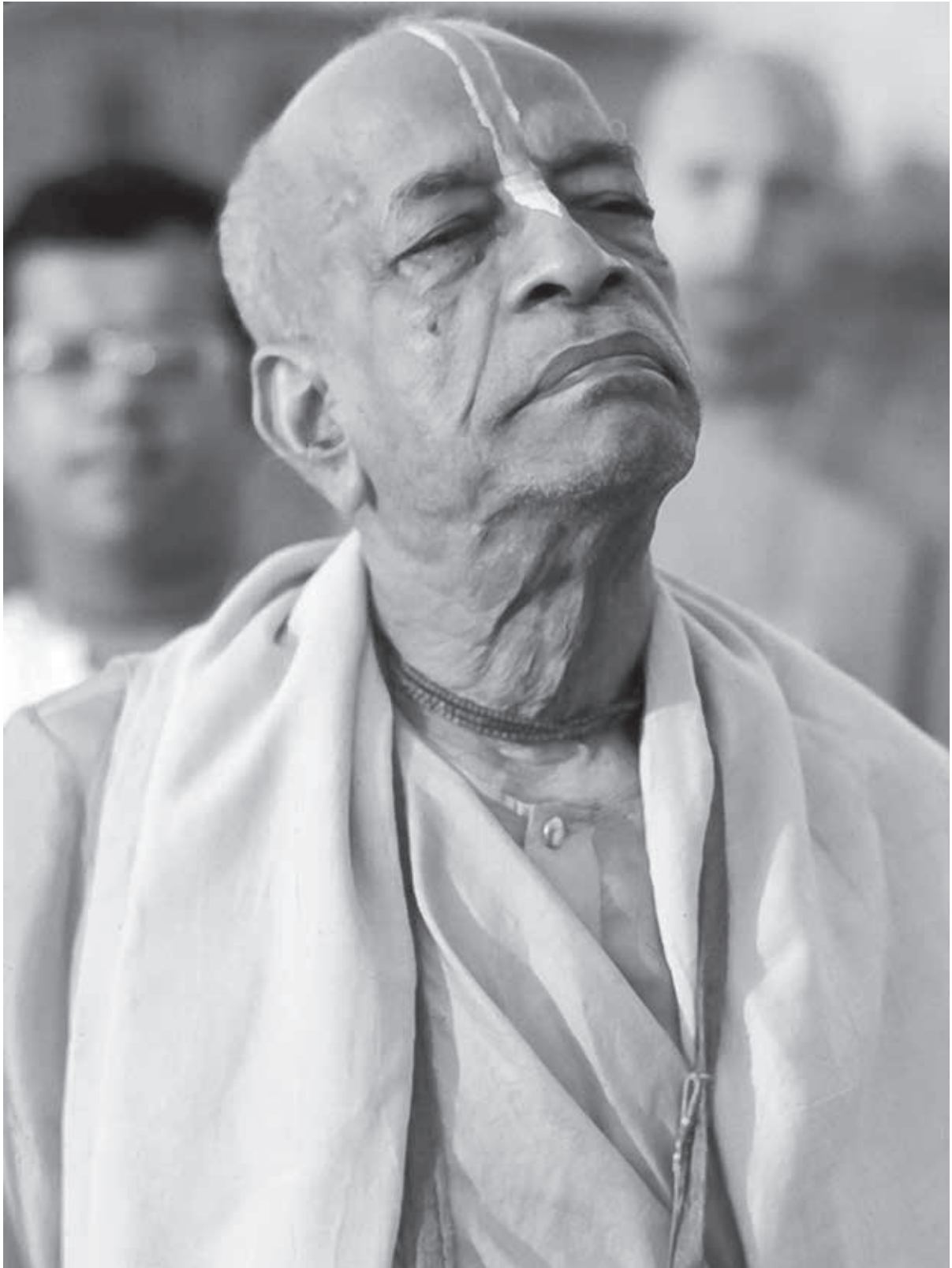
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you on your auspicious appearance day.

You are the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness; everybody joining ISKCON has, and will have, a very deep connection with you for many, many generations to come.

Without you as our pure spiritual guide and source of inspiration, it would be impossible to keep our bigger ISKCON family together so all of us can advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Your instructions are our protection.

Recently in the *Bhāgavatam* classes we were discussing the *Haṁsa-guḥya* prayers, and the subject came



up of how the individual soul interacts with the Supersoul. It is clear that you were especially favored by the Lord and that you were constantly in direct contact with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You read with interest the books you wrote because the words you had written came from the Supersoul, so you were always eager to read the realizations spoken by the Lord in your heart. You were always conscious of Kṛṣṇa, and you were always connecting everything you saw, did, spoke, remembered, and ate with Kṛṣṇa.

Just before ending my service as temple president in Radhadesh, I was asked to become involved in the Māyāpur project. I pray to you and your disciples on this auspicious day to be allowed to be an instrument in your hands for the development of this glorious project. Māyāpur is your place of worship, and it is also the headquarters of your ISKCON movement. The world should look at Māyāpur as ISKCON's leading project; whatever is done in Māyāpur should be pleasing to you, and it should be representative of your teachings in all respects.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you introduced us to the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.3) it is said that the *Bhāgavatam* is the mature fruit of the desire tree of the Vedic literature. The *Bhāgavatam* emanated from the lips of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, making this fruit even more relishable. And your purports made the *Bhāgavatam* even more relishable and understandable for our Kali-yuga minds and intelligence. Every aspect of Kṛṣṇa consciousness you gave us has so much meaning and is so efficient in its application.

A guest once asked you, "How can the soul achieve perfection? It seems that he has to reincarnate slowly, through many bodies, to achieve perfection."

Your reply was very hopeful: "No. When you are diseased you can be cured quickly if you take the proper treatment. That's all. Disease is not hopelessness. Otherwise, why do people go to a physician for treatment? Similarly, out of ignorance you are now in this miserable condition, but if you are treated by a bona fide spiritual master, you'll be cured. Originally, every one of us is pure. Now we have become contaminated by material conditions. But there is a process for eradicating this material contamination. Then we will again become pure. And as soon as we become pure, there is no more birth, old age, disease, and death. Finished." The process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness you gave finishes our material condition, provided we take the medicine.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving your life for the benefit of all of us and for the billions of people yet to come in contact with you.

The servant of your servant,

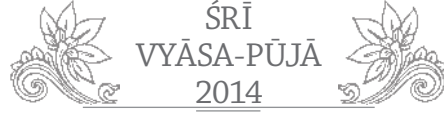
Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa

Kavicandra Swami

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

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

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



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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Each year as I witness the incredible growth of your movement, I am more bewildered and incapable of expressing myself. The unlimited nature of your influence is overwhelming.

I wish I could be genuinely grateful that you have allowed me to have the association of devotees who are so dedicated to your service. You made complete arrangements to give Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission to the world, and beyond. You translated the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and *Nectar of Devotion*. You made all the teachings of the previous *ācāryas* available for everyone.

Then, miraculously, you created a society of devotees where fallen souls like myself could find shelter in the proper atmosphere to understand these most exalted literatures. On top of that, you called Lord Kṛṣṇa to appear in His Deity form so that we could render personal service to Him. And you inspired us to distribute your books.

I do not know how I have had the good fortune to be able to associate with your devotees. I can only think it is something like when Lord Nityānanda Prabhu thought that if Jagāi and Mādhāi could become devotees that would prove the amazing powers of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. One godbrother once told me that I was proof of Lord Caitanya's causeless mercy.

I pray that I can be really grateful and fully dedicate what is left of this short lifetime to your service. Please take over my life for your pleasure.

Your aspiring servant,

Kavicandra Swami

Madhusevita Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to your divine appearance day.

This year, 2014, we will observe the 40th anniversary of your visit to Rome, and I would like to recall two incidents during that visit that were significant for me.

The first concerns your taking *prasādam* in your room. Bāla-Gopāla Devī Dāsī had diligently cooked a number of tasty preparations for you and brought a *thāli* into your room. There were mostly Indian-style *sabjīs*, rice, etc., but one bowl was filled with *gnocchi*, an Italian dish made with potatoes, flour, tomato, and cheese. You ate all the preparations except the *gnocchi*, and then you called for Bāla Gopāla and asked her, "What is this?"

"Gnocchi, Śrīla Prabhupāda," she replied.

You dropped one in your mouth, then another one, and another, and finished the whole bowl with a smile of appreciation.

What an encouragement for tongue-driven and bodily-identified Italians like myself! That simple act opened up wonderful possibilities for attracting large portions of the population to Kṛṣṇa consciousness through Italian *prasādam*. *Yukta-vairāgya* indeed!

The second, more significant incident concerns the translation of a room conversation.

Some guests had come to see you, and there was a need for a translator. Āli Kṛṣṇa Devī Dāsī, the official translator, wasn't available, so Dhanañjaya Prabhu, the temple president, called on me to replace her. I had never before translated from English to Italian, but there I was, having to translate the words of my spiritual master! I was excited and anxious.

After the normal greetings, you started with a simple approach to the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and I somehow translated the few words you'd spoken. But then, out of an excess of zeal, I continued to speak to the guests, elaborating on what you'd said to make sure they had understood correctly and received the message in its entirety.

At that point you turned to Dhanañjaya and, somewhat surprised and amused, asked, "Is *he* preaching or am I preaching?" At which Dhanañjaya, in total anxiety, started calling loudly, "Where is Āli Kṛṣṇa!? Where is Āli Kṛṣṇa!?"

That was the end of my translating career.

Even though this last incident might be brushed off as just the mistake of an immature, overzealous young devotee, in my humble opinion it carries a deeper meaning: we shouldn't, at any stage of our spiritual and philosophical development, think we can explain our founder-*ācārya* better than he can explain himself.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, since you are an empowered incarnation of the previous *ācāryas* and Gaura-Nitāi's compassion, you can directly reach the soul and perfectly transmit the eternal message of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa without adulteration.

The recent booklet entitled *Śrīla Prabhupāda: the Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON* clearly outlines your unique, unparalleled position and potency in delivering Kṛṣṇa consciousness to *anyone* in this world in a living, vibrant, perpetual way.

Though motivated by good intentions, if anyone thinks that factors like time, place, circumstance, or audience justify deemphasizing your personality and your teachings, and who instead thinks he can or should serve your mission by devising a better means to touch people's hearts, I pray for his safety from the most dangerous *maryādā-vyatikrama* offense.

I, for one, am happy to remain eternally a fool at your lotus feet.

Your humble servant,

Madhusevita Dāsa

Mālatī Devī Dāsī

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

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñi-pracāriṇe
nirviṣeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dearest revered lord and master Śrīla Prabhupāda, heart of our hearts,

Please accept my *danḍavat* obeisances at your lotus feet, forever and always.

The other night there was an unusual display of four sequential lunar eclipses. When the moon was fully covered by the first one, it was seen as a dramatic reddish vision called a Blood Moon, which occurs very

rarely. Nonetheless, it was still the same moon, despite its temporarily changed features. We can observe that something so fixed as the moon can go through superficial changes, only to reemerge as “the same old moon” we are accustomed to observing and musing upon. On the other hand, while you are as illuminating as the full moon, always offering soothing rays of transcendental truth and knowledge, you never change for even a fraction of a moment. Therefore we always hold on to you in complete faith, confident you will guide us and correct us in all circumstances.

You never changed your message, and this was reflected in your pure-hearted demeanor, resolute firmness, and unwavering determination to serve the order of your beloved spiritual master under all circumstances. Unlike the moon, which goes through various cycles, you remain as an eternally full moon, fixed in your sphere of unalloyed devotion, never covered by any clouds or inclement weather patterns, and thus your potency to continue guiding us, your direct disciples, as well as future generations of devotees, is overwhelmingly assured and experienced practically.

May I remain your *dāsī*, fixed in service on the full-moon-like particles of dust emanating from your lotus feet. There is no one else I can fully love in this world except you.

Mālatī Devi Dāsī

Nirañjana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances in the dust of your beautiful, soft, and exceptionally cool two lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Today is your Vyāsa-pūjā. It’s the time for me to take a closer look into the heart I offered you forty years ago and to honestly assess whether or not I’ve lived up to your expectations. As I stand before you today, unfortunately I feel prone to lament more than anything else. I am so much in need of your mercy, but what have I done to qualify myself for all the mercy the most magnanimous Lord Nityānanda has empowered you to give? Whatever I’ve done, there is one thing I’m sure of—it was not enough. There is so much more I know that you expect from me.

These days, the topic of mercy is something I speak about a lot. I must speak about it because I know that I’m desperately in need of it. The simple truth, known only to those who are worthy to be considered a devotee by the Lord and His pure devotees, is that a devotee is one who is always dependent upon the mercy of the Lord and His pure devotees. But I have no right to get the Lord’s mercy. I have no right to even ask the Lord for His mercy. Why should He even listen to me? Who am I? I have not bound Him within the core of my heart. I have not served Him in any way that would be pleasing to Him. I do not desperately call out to Him like a child calling for his mother. I don’t remember Him in both happiness and distress. In fact, I don’t remember Him in any condition of life. I haven’t surrendered my life to Him—in fact I haven’t surrendered anything at all to Him. And worst of all is that I have absolutely no love for Him. Why should He give me even a drop of His mercy?

Yet I have the audacity to quote Lord Brahmā in lectures again and again, to the effect that “one who is favored by even a slight trace of the mercy of Your [Kṛṣṇa’s] lotus feet can understand the greatness of Your [Kṛṣṇa’s] personality,” as if I have understood something significant about Kṛṣṇa’s personality. The sad truth is that I know nothing about the greatness of Kṛṣṇa’s personality, and the reason for that is so obvious. I’ve done absolutely nothing to qualify myself for even the slightest trace of a trace of His mercy.

Yet, somehow, by some unimaginable good fortune created only by you, despite all my disqualifications, Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul in everyone's heart, revealed something to me forty years ago about the greatness of *your* personality. I don't know what I did to deserve that mercy, but since it has been confirmed in *śāstra* that it comes only by the combined mercy of Kṛṣṇa and you, I can only conclude that you must have somehow included this incognizant *jīva* in your prayers when you asked Kṛṣṇa to give out that mercy. Certainly I did not ask for it. I didn't even know it existed.

*naivoṣayanty aṣacitiṁ kavayas taveśa
brahmāyusāpi kṛtam ṛddha-mudaḥ smarantaḥ
yo 'ntar bahis tanu-bhṛtām aśubham vidhunvann
ācārya-caittya-vapuṣā sva-gatiṁ vyanakti*

“O my Lord! Transcendental poets and experts in spiritual science could not fully express their indebtedness to You even if they were endowed with the prolonged lifetime of Brahmā, for You appear in two features—externally as the *ācārya* and internally as the Supersoul—to deliver the embodied living being by directing him how to come to You.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.29.6)

Kṛṣṇa listens to you. You have everything from Kṛṣṇa that I don't have. You are the true possessor of Kṛṣṇa's mercy, and it is you who have the power to pour upon me more and more of that same mercy that was revealed to me then. But it seems that even though forty years have passed since the time I received His mercy through you, I still have not lived up to your expectations. I need to become ever-increasingly greedy for your mercy. I know that there must be no limits to the mercy you carry, because every day of my life I see so many examples of those who have received it from you.

When I travel to so many places throughout the world, I see people come to life when they hear about you. I see devotees becoming ever-increasingly eager to glorify you and to dedicate every fiber of their existence in service to you. I see people dance in ecstasy upon receiving the holy names, which you continue to deliver throughout the world, even in the most remote corners of the world. I see people who never before knew anything about you beg for the opportunity to read the books written by you. I see devotees shunning invitations to find mercy elsewhere due to the deepest conviction that everything needed for Kṛṣṇa's mercy is coming from you. I see the lives of people changing as they gradually transform into bright-faced, enthusiastic beggars for your mercy by having associated with those who love you. I see children who have grown up in your movement and who are making plans to spend the rest of their lives in service to you. I see devotees crying unlimited tears in gratitude for all you've done for them. All this, and so much more, is all due to your mercy. The evidence is clear. There is no limit to your mercy.

Still, somehow this unfortunate beggar has not progressed enough in his desire to receive another installment of this inexhaustible mercy. I can only lament and maintain hope against hope that one day you may consider me a fit candidate for your unlimited mercy.

On this most auspicious day of your divine appearance in this material world, I therefore beg you to please know that I have nothing left to do before you today than to beg, plead, and, if it's at all possible, even cry out for your mercy. Despite my continued lack of qualification, I know I have no other hope, and yet I remain confident that there is every good reason to hope.

In the dust of your lotus feet,

Your unworthy servant,

Nirañjana Swami



Rādhānāth Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Today I was reading the manuscript of Śyāmasundara Prabhu's upcoming book chronicling his incredible experiences with you. He takes us to your side, watching and listening as you fearlessly yet gracefully share your timeless message of pure devotion for Kṛṣṇa—from a storefront in Haight Ashbury overcrowded with confused, drugged-out hippies, to the coveted home of John Lennon with the Beatles, and back to India, where you moved among industrialists, politicians, villagers, and Kumbha-melā sādhus. Then we travel with you around the world—behind the formidable Iron Curtain in Moscow, and on to Africa, the Orient, Europe, Australia . . . And still, today, your miraculous pastimes continue to astonish us.

While taking this journey with you, we are astounded to witness how you appreciate the spiritual potential in everyone, everywhere. After your first-ever airplane flight, you explained it all with a simple analogy: above the clouds of *māyā*, the sun of Kṛṣṇa is always shining.

The open secret of your life is your unconditional love for Kṛṣṇa, your total surrender to the will of your Guru Mahārāja, your limitless faith in Kṛṣṇa's holy names, your unwillingness to compromise Lord Caitanya's essential teachings, and your inexhaustible compassion for all beings.

You are teaching us that the highest preaching is simply to love Kṛṣṇa and be His loving puppet . . . and to dance as He wishes us to dance.

Please accept my life as your property . . . forever.

Your servant,

Rādhānāth Swami

Rāmāi Swami

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, for some reason you favored me with your mercy. I realize more and more how fortunate I was to have just a few moments of your association and get volumes of your invaluable instructions. Lord Caitanya said to Rūpa Gosvāmī:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

“According to their karma, all living entities are wandering throughout the entire universe. Some of them are being elevated to the upper planetary systems, and some are going down into the lower planetary systems.

Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By the mercy of both Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 19.151)

Prabhupāda was a chance in a million,
 Without which I was lost to oblivion.
 Though my bad qualities were surely rife,
 He picked me up and saved my life.

O glorious guru, far renowned,
 With highest fame and virtue crowned,
 Please grant us now, without reserve,
 The love and strength by which you serve.

Peerless Saint, your virtues famed,
 Our desires subdued and passions tamed.
 You were firm, just, and ever true;
 Love and service you kept in view.

Good luck to us all, O pious chief.
 Within our hearts no needless grief.
 Make our path all hindrance free;
 Pure and perfect it shall be.

Never for anger, lust, or gain
 Would your lips with falsehood stain.
 With skill, knowledge, sense, and tact
 You were good to advise and bold to act.

O best of saints, we had no power,
 Without you, to live one hour.
 Our yearning hearts at once would break;
 Just like children, we lived for your sake.

Your mind and grace beyond compare,
 Who but you would show such care?
 Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whom you loved so much,
 Moved in you with compassion’s touch.

Wherever you walked, we paced behind
 Because you were of such lofty mind.
 Even the gods were filled with joy
 To see your disciples in your deploy.

As when the autumn moon rides high
 And floods with lovely light the sky,
 As when a man by want distressed
 With unexpected wealth is blessed,

All over the world people were freed
 From spot and stain of impious deed.
 Traveling far, many lands you blessed;
 You gave them a boon they long possessed.

As when the sunrays pierce a cloud,
 You came to us through the crowd.
 Rejoicing to hear the words you said,
 At your feet we bowed our head.

Kṛṣṇa’s name you spread around;
 Soon they vibrated the holy sound.
 “So be it!” the devotees cried:
 Lord Caitanya’s will is ratified.

Great Saint the entire world adored,
 A humble servant of the Lord—
 “Welcome, Prabhupāda!” we would say;
 Your mercy and grace we cannot repay.

Like darkness-destroying rising sun,
 Empowered from above, you got it done.
 Prabhupāda, how fortunate were we;
 Only the ignorant would disagree.

’Tis meet and right in many a way
 That we to thee should honor pay.
 You were a marvel to our eyes,
 Just like medicine that purifies.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *ki jaya!*

Your insignificant servant,

Rāmāi Swami

Favored by thee, our wish is still,
 Prabhupāda, to perform thy will.
 No need at great length to explain
 The object that our heart would gain.

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

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

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

I also offer my fallen obeisances at the feet of those who restlessly seek the mercy found at Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus feet, so that they may be blessed with the strength and intelligence to follow resolutely in his footsteps in thought, in speech, and in actions. May these Prabhupādānugas grant me their mercy.

With the help of many devotees, this year I completed the book *Śrīla Prabhupāda: The Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON*. It has been published as "A GBC Foundational Document" by the GBC Press and made freely available for download at www.founderacharya.org. I am extremely grateful for having been able to do this work, because what I discovered so much deepened and enriched my appreciation for Śrīla Prabhupāda and his achievements. I hope that reading the book will do the same for others.

What I learned during the course of research and writing is more than could be spelled out explicitly in that little book. I want to set forth some of it here.

My research led me to read through the issues of the Gauḍīya Maṭha's English-language periodical, *The Harmonist*, from its beginning in June 1927 up to the departure of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in January of 1937. The importance of this periodical to the Gauḍīya Maṭha is shown, first of all, by the fact that *The Harmonist* was the continuation of *Sajjana Toshani*, a point emphasized on the cover of every issue:

ESTABLISHED BY THAKUR BHAKTIVINODE IN 1879 A.D.

THE HARMONIST

OR

SREE SAJJANA TOSHANI

Sajjana Toshani had been the flagship periodical of the Vaiṣṇava movement begun by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who, upon his retirement from government service in 1894, assumed direct editorship, a job his son took up with *The Harmonist* from its beginning. (Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura liked the title of his job: "The Editor" or just "Editor" is how he was denoted in the regular published reports of his activities around his movement. For example, "On the return of the Sankirtan procession to the Math the Sree Vighras were solemnly installed by the Editor. . . . Thereafter, the Editor and a large procession of devotees followed Sree Shalagram.")

From this we can appreciate the high priority given by Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura to English-language preaching, which formed a core element of his organization's sustained and concentrated drive to take Lord Caitanya's movement to the Western world and establish it there.

This priority is also attested to by *Sree Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya*, the first of a projected three-volume English-language opus written to introduce the *yuga-avatāra* and *saṅkīrtana* to the cultivated, educated sector of Western society. Written by Prof. Nisikant Sanyal—Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's disciple and right-hand man for English-language preaching—and published in Madras by the Gauḍīya Maṭha there, this book—with its wide historical scope, its learned references, its elevated diction, its careful editing and proofreading, and its high-grade paper and binding—gives compelling testimony to the time, effort, and expense invested in producing a formidable and impressive introduction for the intended audience.

The Gauḍīya Maṭha very quickly expanded throughout India, but this feat, however impressive in itself, was considered a preparation for its next achievement, the leap onto the world stage. In this regard, the

celebrated white marble temple at Bhag Bazaar in Calcutta had special significance. Calcutta, which had been the headquarters of the British Raj until 1914, was a “world city,” and its sophisticated English-educated Bengalis could think of themselves as participants in a global or transnational culture. Thus the Bhag Bazaar temple was properly located, and properly impressive, to be the Gauḍīya Maṭha’s own headquarters for world preaching.

Everything was therefore in place for the three preachers of the Vishva Vaishnava Raj Sabha to embark from Bombay on April 10, 1933, aboard the *M. V. Victoria* bound for Genoa en route to London.

Reading issue after issue of *The Harmonist* instilled in me a vivid sense of what the Gauḍīya Maṭha was like when it had been sound and healthy, brimming with spiritual vitality and enthusiasm and going energetically from achievement to achievement. It seemed to have unstoppable momentum.

And then, as we know too well, with the demise of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura it fractured and failed. Some life remained in the separated parts, but basically it was over. Now, having studied *The Harmonist*, I was able to comprehend just how much was tragically lost, and I gained a much more powerful grasp of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s own feelings of disappointment, desolation, and grief as the great effort of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura seemed to crash down at the very cusp of its greatest achievement.

Consequently, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s own achievement shines forth all the more brilliantly. At his very first and his very last communication with Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Prabhupāda received the order to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in English—an endeavor, as I have noted, which had been a core component of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s organized drive toward the global extension of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And Śrīla Prabhupāda took up the order, even though, under the circumstances, he had to do it practically alone. As his spiritual master had begun an English-language periodical in preparation for world preaching, so Śrīla Prabhupāda began *Back To Godhead* magazine in 1944, some two decades before he would eventually reach America. Śrīla Prabhupāda had to perform all the roles himself: writer, editor, proofreader, publisher, business manager, subscription manager, and distributor. In a similar way, he produced a three-volume English-language work for world preaching—all without the relatively huge financial and human resources of the Gauḍīya Maṭha.

I’ve held Professor Nisikanta Sanyal’s *Sree Kṛṣṇa Caitanya* in one hand, and a volume of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s original First Canto *Śrīmad Bhagavatam* in the other, and the contrast is immediately striking to the eye. The first is clearly a product of plenty; the second, of want. Yet the second eventually achieved more than the first. What counts is the really important but hidden ingredient, *vyavasāyātmikā-buddhi*, that resolute determination Śrīla Prabhupāda inherited from his spiritual master and described repeatedly as the “the secret of success.”

Endowed with that determination, in 1965 Śrīla Prabhupāda was able to restart the expansion of Kṛṣṇa consciousness just where the Gauḍīya Maṭha had left off. Three devotees had gone to England in 1933 and preached to some effect in England and Germany, but in 1936 Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura became greatly displeased with his leading preacher in Europe and recalled him. Then, in the wee hours of New Year’s day 1937, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura left this world, the Gauḍīya Maṭha subsequently fragmented, and the world expansion of Kṛṣṇa consciousness was put on hold for three decades.

That long hiatus may seem to be one more unfortunate product of adventitious human shortcomings; from another perspective, it seems providential. After all, the year that saw the Gauḍīya Maṭha preachers venture to Europe also saw Adolf Hitler gain dictatorial power in Germany. (We encounter in *The Harmonist* news reports from the preachers in Europe, such as: “Adolf Hitler, the President and Chancellor of Germany, through the office of the External Politics of the German Government, has been pleased to invite Swami B. H. Bon as a State guest of honour for an interview with him on November 2 next” (Sept. 4, 1934), or “Sree Vyasa Puja will be celebrated in Berlin on February 27. His Excellency Herrn Dr. Goebbels has kindly consented to preside over the function” (Feb 14, 1935).

All hell—literally—was preparing to break loose on earth.

On occasion, Śrīla Prabhupāda sometimes publicly lamented his apparent tardiness in coming to the West. But Kṛṣṇa is in charge of timing, and He brought Śrīla Prabhupāda to New York at precisely the ripe moment. Finding there that the audience receptive to his message was not the expected cultured elite but rather an alienated cohort of misled, uncultured youth, Prabhupāda did not turn away, and from this unlikely

start he forged in twelve eventful years an energetic worldwide organization.

It is evident that Śrīla Prabhupāda had studied his spiritual master and his activities with scrupulous care. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s intense compassion for suffering humanity and his drive to do everything to assuage it—these Śrīla Prabhupāda made his own. He also understood that a large-scale, rational organization of human and material resources offers the most effective and efficient way to save as many as possible. With characteristic perspicacity, he grasped the fundamental principles, and even boiled them down into potent *sūtras*, which his secretary Śyāmasundara Dāsa heard and mailed out in a 1971 newsletter: “Books are the basis, preaching the essence, utility the principle, purity the force.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda had examined the Gauḍīya Maṭha and saw what worked and, when the organization foundered, what didn’t. In this way the Gauḍīya Maṭha served as the beta test version of ISKCON.

With full faith in his spiritual master, undeterred by lack of resources, undiscouraged in the face of all disappointments, Śrīla Prabhupāda showed fully by his actions what it means to be a disciple, and what discipleship is capable of achieving. His great achievement is his achievement in being a disciple. From that humility comes his greatness. This is his crowning achievement, and his lesson to us all.

In service to the servants of Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

Romapāda Swami

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

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

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

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

My dear and most respected spiritual master and eternal father,

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

I want to express—in fact I want to offer to you with utmost enthusiasm—my ever-growing appreciation for your monumental achievement of effectively carrying forward the message of unalloyed devotion, gifted by Lord Caitanya and drawn from the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, to millions upon millions of persons in this world. Who can fathom the extent of your compassion and brilliance, envisioning in comprehensive practical terms how to make abundantly accessible the highest welfare to all souls?

Like Prahlāda Mahārāja, you made it your singular focus of concern to deliver all unnecessarily suffering souls back to their original spiritual position, free from the inebrieties of conditioned, material life. Tirelessly you extended yourself to facilitate achieving this cure of all souls, acting as the conduit of the overwhelming

flow of descending mercy of our *guru-paramparā*, with intense devotional focus upon the instructions of your beloved Guru Mahārāja, acting as the direct instrument in his hands.

In their prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa while He was still within the womb of Devakī, the demigods offered a beautiful prayer that expresses very eloquently what I am attempting to convey:

*svayaṁ samuttīrya sudustaraṁ dyuman
 bhavārṇavaṁ bhīmam adabhra-sauhr̥dāḥ
 bhavat-padāmbhoruha-nāvam atra te
 nidhāya yātāḥ sad-anugraho bhavān*

“O Lord who resemble the shining sun, You are always ready to fulfill the desire of Your devotee, and therefore You are known as a desire tree. When *ācāryas* completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because You are very merciful to Your other devotees, You accept this method to help them.”

Indeed! Kṛṣṇa reciprocated with your ardent prayer-filled devotional effort in an unprecedented scale!

*kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nama-saṅkīrtana
 kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahi tāra pravartana*

*tāhā pravartāilā tumi,—ei ta ‘pramāṇa’
 kṛṣṇa-śakti dhara tumi,—ithe nāhi āna*

“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. You have spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore it is evident that You have been empowered by Lord Kṛṣṇa. There is no question about it.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 7.11–12)

Although this was stated by Vallabha Bhaṭṭa in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* to describe Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the same applies equally to you, His empowered *āveśa* representative.

With unprecedented empowerment, you have given your followers the greatest gift: the means to cross over the insurmountable ocean of material existence by the most sublime process of unalloyed devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the mood of the residents of Vṛndāvana. *Vraja-prema* is our destination, the aspiration for which you have indelibly imprinted deep within the core of our hearts. You gave your sacred association freely, and with it our life’s ultimate goal.

How full and totally satisfying becomes the life of one who has accepted your gift! In turn, how simple it becomes to leave aside the glitter-gold allurements and distractions of Māyā’s realm! All we must do is receive and embrace within the core of our heart the gift you came to give.

As exalted is the goal, equally simple is the process. We merely must take sincere shelter of the means to cross the material ocean, left behind by Your Divine Grace. Doing so makes the heart simple and calm, like Prahlāda’s. The holy name, your sublime Bhaktivedanta purports, and the association of wonderfully enthusiastic and expansively-thinking compassionate devotees can conquer the mind and fill the heart with all the nourishment needed to endlessly carry on blissfully serving you and your mission.

The same is expressed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his *Vidagdha-mādhava*: “I do not know how much nectar the two syllables ‘Kṛṣṇa’ have produced. When the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is chanted, it appears to dance within the mouth. We then desire many, many mouths. When that name enters the holes of the ears, we desire many millions of ears. And when the holy name dances in the courtyard of the heart, it conquers the activities of the mind, and therefore all the senses become inert.”

As the blissful garden of *bhakti* grows and grows within each community, what to speak of globally, the diversity of *vaiṣṇava-saṅga* also expands. Respecting each individual’s unique personality traits, their talents and callings, their spirit and unique attraction for Kṛṣṇa, is so important! Unity within that rich diversity is equally important.



Here is one of my favorites!

Śrīla Prabhupāda: When you have purified your senses and engaged those purified senses in the service of the master of the senses, Kṛṣṇa, you have perfected your life. That is no duality, and that is absolute.

Mr. O'Grady: But the system insists that you think yourself American or Indian or African or whatever.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. Materialistic society means duality.

Mr. O'Grady: But that is unavoidable. How can you avoid material existence?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That is possible in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The lotus lives in the water but never touches the water.

Mr. O'Grady: I don't think you can explain situations in one area with metaphors from another. How can you argue political problems in terms of vague spiritual concepts? Their nature is completely different.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Sometimes a variety of examples helps us to understand or appreciate the problem better. In the vase there is a variety of flowers, and that variety helps us better appreciate the idea of flowers. From any point of view, Kṛṣṇa can resolve all problems. Why just the problems of Irishmen or Englishmen? All problems. That is called unity in diversity. Our students come from different backgrounds, but because they are all in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they are unified.

I meditate again and again on your words of ringing endorsement of the unity-in-diversity principle, which has become, from my tiny perspective, ever-increasingly important as your ISKCON organization expands. Beyond the platitudes of polite social convention and nuanced social theory, when core consciousness consistently exhibits a deeply rooted spiritual and Kṛṣṇa-centered conception of life, naturally existing diversities enjoy the wholesome atmosphere of harmony and unity, combining in a display of exquisitely captivating beauty.

Kindly keep me engaged in your service, assisting you in fostering unity within the expansive diversity of the Vaiṣṇava *saṅga* that naturally arises, inspired by your association, eternally.

The desire to serve you literally forever is deeply and indelibly imbedded within my heart.

Kindly accept my prostrated obeisances again and again.

Aspiring for your eternal service,

Your humble disciple,

Romapāda Swami

Śivarāma Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. Allow me to attempt to honor you with the following words.

It is February 4th of this year. I have just contracted pneumonia and I am laid up with a raging fever only three days before a scheduled flight to India for our annual GBC meetings and Māyāpur festival. I alternate between resting, chanting *jaṇa*, and reading *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*.

I began rereading the *Līlāmṛta* a few months back. It is the first time in the last fifteen years or more

that I am reading this wonderful biography, which I used to read daily after its publication and went through probably fifteen times. It was the way that I—who had personally met you only a few times—aspired to enter deeper into your personality, mission, and pastimes.

Now, at the age at which you lived in Vṛndāvana, writing, printing, and selling your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* alone, when old age and its accomplices are burdening my own travels, regulation, and service, I reread the *Lilāmṛta* in wonder.

The last decade of Kṛṣṇa consciousness has, among other things, increased my appreciation of you and of your gifts. Reading the *Lilāmṛta* further heightened my appreciation of your unwavering determination to fulfill the order of your spiritual master, of the endless obstacles you fearlessly faced, and of the clarity, simplicity, and beauty of your message: chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

I am now at the part that speaks of your struggles on the Bowery.

I read how you walked among the rejects of society and lived with a madman for lack of any other shelter, and how when your host threatened you in a drug-induced frenzy you stood alone on Skid Row with nowhere to go and no possessions but the clothes you wore. You, of aristocratic birth, the pet child of your father, the emissary of Goloka, now stood alone in a foreign land, with no money and no shelter other than the determination that brought you to this lost land.

With this picture in my mind I fall into a feverish reverie:

I see you hurrying down the steep stairs from the loft-temple where insanity reigns. You throw open the door, walk past an expired drunk, and step out onto the sidewalk, looking first this way, then that. Where to go?

My heart breaks. In my dream I weep to think that you went through such danger for me, for my brothers, and for my sisters. Such kindness, such compassion, such love!

I wake up, the picture of you standing on the street still fresh in my mind, tears still on my cheeks. I sigh, “My spiritual master was no ordinary spiritual master. He saved me.”

Your determination, your dedication to your mission, your unconditional compassion—I submerge my mind in thoughts of them while whispering again, “My spiritual master was no ordinary spiritual master. He saved me.”

My heart heavy with gratitude, I think, “What can I do?”

“Do as I do!”

It is a tall order. But my spiritual master is no ordinary spiritual master. He can bless me to do as he does.

Now months later, having returned from India, still reading the *Lilāmṛta*, and more enchanted by your pastimes than ever, I humbly pray that you bless me with a fraction of your determination, your faith, your compassion. Everything of value that I am at present is by your grace. Certainly by the same grace I can become a resolute soldier in Lord Caitanya’s transcendental army, of which you are the commander in chief.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I offer my prayers at your lotus feet. Please make me into what you wanted your disciples to be. I may be a difficult challenge, but you are not an ordinary spiritual master. You can do anything.

Your servant,

Śivarāma Swami

Tamohara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

On this most auspicious day, your disciples reflect upon your glories, your divine transcendental qualities, and your remarkable accomplishments. On a more personal note, we also express our gratitude for what you have given us. Reflecting on what you have given is enormously complex but also very straightforward. Because, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have simply given us *everything*.

You have given us eternal life, liberation from the modes of nature, and release from the suffering of the material world.

You have given us the perfect philosophy and the essential books of Vedic literature, which you have perfectly explained through your Bhaktivedanta purports.

You have given us the most easy yet sublime process of self-realization, the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

You have given us the most beautiful Deities to worship; the best association, our fellow devotees; the most moving and uplifting music, *bhajana* and *kīrtana*; and the most delicious and purifying food, *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*.

You have also given us a movement to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to all spirit souls: your International Society for Krishna Consciousness. You have given us the perfect process to preach and spread the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout the world.

While you have asked us to stretch our brains and intelligence to help propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement, it is *you* who have given us the blueprint, the strategy, the goal, and the mission.

You personally showed us the methods of bringing this great practice and philosophy to the world. Following the previous *ācāryas*, especially your guru, you demonstrated to us how to attract the conditioned souls by the processes of book distribution, *kīrtana*, festivals, *prasādam* distribution, and temple worship. You showed us how to develop a Kṛṣṇa conscious culture and society through schools, farms, temples, preaching centers, restaurants, and arts such as drama, dance, and music.

You also taught us to boldly preach the absolute truth of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. You not only gave us the content of *what* to preach, but you demonstrated *how* to preach. You set the perfect example of complete faith by presenting the Vedic philosophy *as it is*, explaining that your credit was that you never added or subtracted from the philosophy but faithfully represented the *paramparā* and your Guru Mahārāja.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that we may somehow continue your movement with a fraction of the faith and conviction you demonstrated to us. We were all attracted to your bold preaching of the message of Lord Caitanya and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and we must cultivate that same faith that our own words, when simply repeating your instructions to us, will have some small ability to penetrate the hearts of the *jīvas* in this dark Age of Kali. You are eternally our *ācārya* and exemplar, and you will remain the preeminent *śikṣā-guru* for thousands of years. If we can somehow follow in your footsteps, your work will continue, this movement will spread throughout the world, and your fame will increase all over the world.

Yes, you have given us everything, and for that we remain eternally grateful.

Your most fallen servant,

Tamohara Dāsa