

HOMAGES FROM MINISTRIES



ISKCON Congregational Development Ministry

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On the most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, we would like to thank you for everything you have done for us and report to you the achievements of ISKCON's Congregational Development Ministry.

This year we are all celebrating fifty years of ISKCON, Your Divine Grace having established your Society in July of 1966. This means fifty years of expanding, learning, training, preaching, and much more. These fifty years would not have been set in motion if you hadn't set sail for the United States in 1965. Thanks to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the following has been made possible:

- Last year alone, the Māyāpur Nāma-haṭṭa hosted numerous pandal programs, some attracting several thousand people. The Nāma-haṭṭa devotees also held many home programs, organized programs for children and students, and put together various other outreach festivals. The total number of attendees at these programs was 4,598,415!

If it weren't for Your Divine Grace, we wouldn't know anything about Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's congregational development methods. We would have never heard the word *nāma-haṭṭa*, what to speak of knowing what it means or how to offer some support for expanding the "Market of the Holy Name."

This year, at the ISKCON Leadership Saṅga (ILS), our Ministry:

- Presented nine different seminars a total of thirty-one times to an estimated one thousand devotees.
- Distributed hundreds of pamphlets (and also sold books and other materials).
- Organized, in collaboration with ISKCON's Youth Ministry, the first Youth Leadership Saṅga (YLS), with the participation of youth leaders from the UK, USA, Australia, Malaysia, South Africa, and Indonesia. As a result, a Youth Manual will be produced for furthering ISKCON youth programs worldwide.
- Introduced two new projects: Bhakti Marriages (online premarital training) and the Vaishnava Life Counseling Course (pastoral skills to serve the community).
- Held the annual Congregational Award Ceremony, recognizing the efforts of various devotees.

If it weren't for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, what seminars could we present, and to whom? What would our books be based on? And if you hadn't founded ISKCON, which ISKCON devotee would receive any award? The more we do, the more we realize that everything is possible simply because, out of your unlimited mercy, you established ISKCON and developed it into a worldwide family of devotees.

During this year's Gaura Pūrṇimā Festival, we set up a booth at the ISKCON-50th-anniversary festival and also hosted a Bhakti-vriksha celebration at your Samādhi Auditorium. Our purpose was to share with your followers the great success experienced by those who apply this dynamic preaching method. Bhakti-vriksha programs have made over 27,000 devotees in the past twenty years—an average of one devotee every five hours. These devotees are supported steadily in their Kṛṣṇa consciousness, chant their rounds, and distribute your books, and eventually some of them start leading their own Bhakti-vriksha groups.

If you hadn't done all that you did, none of us would be gathering together at Śrīdhama Māyāpur to celebrate ISKCON's 50th anniversary, none of us would be celebrating the Gaura Pūrṇimā festival, and none

of us would be hosting a Bhakti-vriksha program or doing any outreach. Without you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, there would be no ISKCON.

During the past year we also promoted the Puruṣottama Month, encouraging devotees to increase their devotional service during that auspicious month according to the standard program you gave us. Furthermore, we launched a fund-raising campaign, encouraging devotees to support your vision for communities, families, youth, and children. Whatever project we start and develop, we do it in the hope that we please you by creating resources to help devotee communities flourish and lead a balanced spiritual life.

However, despite all this, we are far from repaying you. In the twelve years from your arrival in New York until your final days, you circled the globe fourteen times, authored more than sixty books, developed ISKCON into a confederation of 108 temples, institutes, and farm communities, and did much more—single-handedly driving all these developments. What you did, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is extremely inspirational and really shows us how much more we could be doing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray to remember that pleasing you is our goal; otherwise, what would be the meaning of anything we do? Our mandate and sincere desire is to please you, and to do that we aim to serve your devotees, your temples, and your congregations. On this outstandingly auspicious day, we thank you immensely for what you have done and continue to do for us, and we request Your Divine Grace's kind blessings so that we can continue to sincerely serve your congregational mission.

Humbly at your feet,

Your servants at the ISKCON Congregational Development Ministry (Śrīdhām Māyāpur Office).

(written by Mañjulālī Mañjarī Seviṇī Devī Dāsī)

Padayātrā Ministry

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, our glorious inaugurator of ISKCON Padayātrā Worldwide,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet, still traveling around the planet with the *padayātrā* parties. All glories to you, the extraordinary and dynamic founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness!

It looks like this year's offering will also be expressed with numbers, which you will have no trouble translating into blissful devotees, wonderful festivals, friendly contacts, very positive media coverage, special encounters, and miracles performed by the all-merciful Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Gaurasundara.

This year marks Padayātrā Worldwide's fortieth anniversary. We pray that it will continue to flourish and that in some not-too-distant future your desire to have millions of *padayātrā* bullock carts around the world will become a reality. When will the day come when there will be a continuous bullock *padayātrā* party in every one of the twenty-nine states and Union Territories of India, spreading the holy names and distributing millions of your transcendental books? When will every ISKCON temple or preaching center in all 195 countries now existing on this planet hold an annual *padayātrā*, in addition to or in conjunction with World Holy Name Week?

On Gaura Pūrṇimā, 2014, the Padayātrā Ministry pledged to have at least fifty *padayātrās* by the end of 2016 as an offering on ISKCON's fiftieth birthday. Since last year we have been progressing a little toward that

goal. We intensified our 50-*padayātrā* campaign by personal contacts, presentations in Radhadesh and at the European farm conference in New Māyāpur, France, and especially with our *padayātrā* booth, displays, and seminars during the recent ISKCON Leadership Saṅga in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur. We also published a 14-page feature on *padayātrā* in this year's March-April issue of the international and Indian editions of *Back to Godhead* magazine.

As of April 10, 27 *padayātrās* have been completed, 12 are being organized, and 11 remain to be organized. You will be happy to know that out of the 39 completed or imminent *padayātrās*, 15—almost two-fifths—travel solely in India. Out of these, five are annual walks, and two are ongoing walks: the All-India *padayātrā* (on the road since 1984) and the Andhra Pradesh/Telangana *padayātrā* (on the road since the end of 2012).

During your eleven years of intense traveling and preaching after you founded ISKCON, you circled the globe fourteen times. But your return to Goloka Vṛndāvana was not the end of your travels. You continued traveling in the form of your *mūrti* or your photo in all the *padayātrā* parties around the world, in 107 countries. From 1976 to the end of 2015, you have circumambulated the globe almost 6.5 times (a total of more than 258,605 kms, or 160,690 miles), out of which 168,300 kms (104,576 miles) were in India. Accompanying you were more than ten thousand *padayātrīs* from various nations.

Besides walking, chanting, dancing, and preaching, *padayātrīs* also very eagerly distribute large quantities of your books, usually by selling them and occasionally by offering them as prizes during various public contests, held for children and adults alike. For many years, alas, the *padayātrā* book scores have not appeared in the BBT International book-score charts due to our negligence in reporting them. In the past, *Padayātrā* India scored very high among the medium-sized temples, and it would probably still do so if the *padayātrīs* properly reported their book scores. For your pleasure we will share with you the 2015 scores of the two ongoing walks in India. The All-India *padayātrā* party of around twenty men distributed a grand total of 96,402 books (20,790 maha books, 1,487 big, 904 medium, and 73,221 small) and the four-man Andhra Pradesh/Telangana party distributed around 142,000 books, mostly medium and small books.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us and empower us so we can print at least one of our *Padayātrā* storybooks by the end of this year. Then the many feet and faces behind these numbers will come alive, and we hope that ISKCON devotees will be more and more enthused to dive into this great ocean of nectar, love, adventure, fun, and purification that is your ISKCON *padayātrā*.

Your servants at the Padayātrā Ministry.

(written by Lokanāth Swami and Gaurāṅgī Devī Dāsī)

