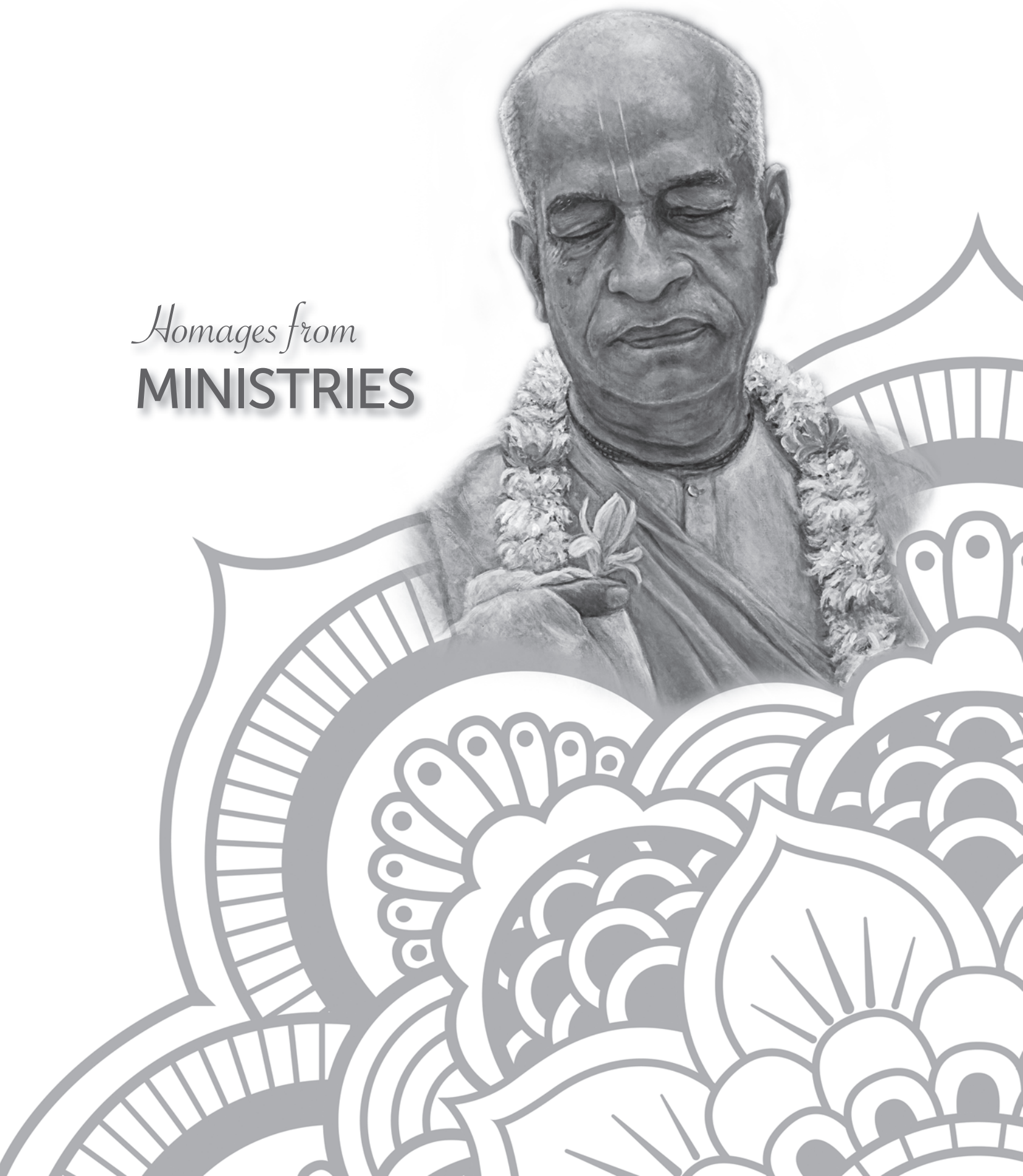


*Homages from*  
**MINISTRIES**





# ISKCON Central Office of Child Protection

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to your magnanimous movement. It is an honor to serve the devotees who make up your International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of ISKCON's establishing the Child Protection Office. During this time we have gone from responding to a pressing need to address incidents of child abuse, to organizing an ecclesiastical system to handle issues when they arise, to expanding prevention of child maltreatment.

Over these years, significant changes have occurred within both ISKCON and the secular world. Technology, the ability to communicate instantly across the globe and have access to information in real time, impels us to be able to respond at a faster pace when child abuse concerns arise. While there is much development to strive for, we are endeavoring to work toward your vision for these Vaiṣṇava children, of whom you said, "If we are able to make a whole generation of our children into fine Kṛṣṇa Conscious preachers that will be the glory of our movement and the glory of your country as well. But if we neglect somehow or other and if we lose even one Vaisnava, that is very great loss." (Letter to Stokakṛṣṇa, 20 June 1972)

Echoing Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, you have taught us that one of the reasons people come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is that they are in distress. This illuminates the need for us to endeavor to shore up your communities and protect children from the abuse and neglect people experience in this Age of Kali. Your ISKCON family is so diverse and inclusive, embracing every culture, every language, and every nationality around the world. Experiencing abuse in childhood can and does undermine other experiences that are positive. Like sand in sweet rice, it becomes difficult to appreciate the goodness; like poison in milk, what should nurture you can kill you. Therefore, we must root child abuse out of ISKCON as a necessary part of building a strong foundation for the long-term health of the Society.

Abuse is a cycle cut by knowledge and practice. Through education, organization, and cooperation we can eradicate child maltreatment from ISKCON communities by your mercy and example. We are not endeavoring to create or expand any culture other than Kṛṣṇa culture, wherein children are valued, protected, and guided to use their inherent abilities in the service of Kṛṣṇa.

This year we are glad to report positive development. By your mercy, devotees are stepping forward to assist with this Vaiṣṇava *sevā*. Śrīla Prabhupāda, kindly inspire more devotees to join this challenging service. It is said that many hands make small work. Whether contributing resources, expertise, or time, the more devotees who take part in creating safe communities for the children, the easier it will be to accomplish our goal and the stronger ISKCON will be. Our goal for your Society is to set an exemplary standard reflective of your teachings and your instructions for child protection that the rest of the world can follow.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please empower us with the necessary skills, attitude, and determination to effectively protect these souls who, from their very childhood, are continuing their journey home and are part of Lord Caitanya's army.

*Your aspiring and dependent servants at ISKCON's Central Office of Child Protection.*

(written by Kāmalesh Kṛṣṇa Dāsa and Lilāśuka Devī Dāsi)

# Padayātrā Ministry

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your lotus feet, still traveling around the planet with the *padayātrā* parties. All glories to you for having launched this very blissful and effective preaching program in ISKCON!

On the occasion of the auspicious 122<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of your birth, we are very happy to report to you that twenty-six *padayātrās*, sixteen of them in India, mostly with bullock carts, took place in 2017. There are still two ongoing *padayātrās* on the roads of Bhārata-varṣa. They are the All-India *padayātrā*, now in Tamil Nadu, and the Telangana/Andhra Pradesh party. We hope that the four new one-day *padayātrās* will expand their scope and duration in the future, as Muralīmohan Prabhu, a congregation member of ISKCON Ahmedabad, has done. The one-day walks he organizes every month attract more than one hundred devotees and serve as an inspiration to neighboring ISKCON temples in Gujarat, such as Baroda and Vallabh Vidyanagar.

Last year saw a total of thirteen annual *padayātrās*: seven in India, four in Europe, and two long solo walks—one by Bhaktimārga Swami, who trekked 1,600 miles across the US, and one by Yaśodādulāl Prabhu from New Zealand, who walked 240 miles from Mahatma Gandhi’s Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad to Dandi. Retracing Gandhi’s historic protest march against salt taxation, Yaśodādulāl chose a corresponding theme—“Enough Salt, Chant Hare Krishna.” He walked alone, carrying a *viñā* like Nārada Muni, constantly chanting and singing the glories of the Lord. He was warmly received wherever he went, winning the hearts of the pious Gujaratis. On the way he interacted with them on a one-on-one basis as well as addressing gatherings in the evenings in his hosts’ homes. His walk caught the attention of the leading newspapers in Gujarat, who appreciated and publicized it. I am hopeful that ISKCON Tirupati will launch their *padayātrā* very soon. I am excited to learn that their plan is to have a permanent *padayātrā* traveling around the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on 14 December 1976 you responded to my letter appealing for financial assistance from the temples, saying:

Do not depend on outside help. For financial support depend on Krishna. Also, book distribution. We are maintaining our huge establishment by selling books. That is wanted. In foreign countries they are distributing huge quantities of books. Money is needed, that you have to collect. You can’t expect money from outside.

We have been raising our own money for some time now; we have finally gotten our act together. The devotees on Our All-India Padayātrā party are raising sufficient funds and doing some amazing book distribution. Last year they distributed a grand total of 106,109 books (63,124 mahā big, 7,193 big, 200 medium, and 35,592 small), thus marking a steady increase from previous years: 96,402 books in 2015 and 97,727 in 2016. In the May World Saṅkīrtana Newsletter they placed second in all the temple categories, with only Māyāpur ahead of them. Every day they are distributing hundreds of *Bhagavad-gītās* and other big books in order to please you.

Last February in Māyāpur we set up an attractive Padayātrā booth at the fourth ISKCON Leadership Saṅga. This year is indeed a very pivotal year for ISKCON to seriously discuss its succession plan vision. The overarching theme of this international Saṅga was to “Keep the wheels moving”—an expression you borrowed from the Indian Railway. This theme was very heartening to us *padayātrīs*, so we modified and expanded it: “Keep the bullock cart wheels rolling and your feet walking!”

The other good news is that the first book on *padayātrā*, *Fulfilling a Prophecy*, by Avadhūta Śīromaṇi Dāsa, was recently published. It is the thrilling narration of a 14,000-kilometer journey with a horse cart

## Homages from Ministries

across North, Central, and South America, undertaken against all odds by a determined couple, Avadhūta Śiromaṇi Prabhu and his wife Candrabhāgā Devī Dāsī. Your presence and mercy made many miracles happen and saved the devotees from all dangers.

We are now ready to print the first volume of a trilogy called *The Padayātrā Story*, which will recount the entire history of all the *padayātrās* worldwide since 1976.

The first volume presents the tradition of *padayātrās* and how all the great Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* used them as a potent means to spread spiritual teachings in India. The Lord Himself as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu walked for almost six years, flooding the country with the holy names. And it is you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, His empowered representative, who introduced bullock-cart *padayātrā* in ISKCON to promulgate the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* and the teachings of the *Gītā* and *Bhāgavatam* to every town and village. The first volume describes your own humble *padayātrā* near Jhansi, the bullock-cart parties from Hyderabad to Māyāpur and from Vṛndāvana to Māyāpur, and finally the phenomenal travel from Dvārakā to Māyāpur via South India. We would like to print this book this year in time for your Vyāsa-pūjā.

At our recent IAC meetings held in Māyāpur I made a presentation on *padayātrā*. You will be pleased that a resolution was passed as follows:

Therefore, it is resolved that all divisional councils, individual temples, and farm communities with *gosālās* in India are encouraged to include *padayātrās* (walking festivals) as one of their key outreach programs.

Temples are recommended to organize a *padayātrā* at least as an annual event. If this is not possible, then they could elect to organize *padayātrās* as frequently as is possible with manageable and varied distance and duration.

You once told a disciple, “This tractor is the downfall of the Indian village system because it does the work of ten men. As soon as farmers stopped using oxen, they sent them to the slaughterhouses.” You instructed me to go to the farm in Hyderabad and encourage the devotees to develop *padayātrā* with their bulls.

With concern for the environment and animal rights increasing, it is high time devotees preach strongly about cow protection and ox power by practically demonstrating how useful these animals are. When *Padayātrā America* started to use oxen, we saw the impact it had on Americans, reflected in the large number of newspaper articles on that topic. We’re also encouraging the organizers of World Holy Name Week to promote the Bullock Cart Saṅkīrtana *padayātrā*, partially or entirely.

It is not surprising that your last desire was to go on bullock-cart *padayātrā* to Govardhana. *Padayātrā* was very close to your heart. You said that “we can have millions of bullock carts all over the world,” thus suggesting how easy it would be to fulfill Lord Caitanya’s every-town-and-village prophecy by using this approach. Being a pure devotee of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi and a powerful visionary, you were and still are supremely empowered to spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement all over the world through every means possible, including, of course, *padayātrā*.

*Your servants at the Padayātrā Ministry.*

(written by Lokanāth Swami and Gaurāṅgī Devī Dāsī)



# Vaiṣṇavī Ministry

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

In the rainy season, when the clouds appear for the first time, the peacocks dance with joy upon seeing them. The peacocks can be compared to persons who are very much harassed in the materialistic way of life. If they can find the association of a person engaged in the loving devotional service of the Lord, they become enlightened and dance just like peacocks. We have practical experience of this: many of our students were dry and morose previous to their coming to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but having come into contact with devotees, they are now dancing like jubilant peacocks. [Kṛṣṇa book, “The Description of Autumn”]

O most merciful servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī and Lord Caitanyadeva! You crossed the seven seas, tossed in a tiny matchbox called the *Jaladuta*, to journey to a far-away Western country. You saw that we were dry and morose, covered by nature’s modes of ignorance and passion. You only wanted to see everyone, all over the world, happy.

Self-realized saints and sages take risks for the spiritual enlightenment of the people in general. . . Such devotees are unafraid of the difficult journey to cross the ocean of nescience. They are always anxious for the welfare of the fallen souls, who are attached to the false enjoyment of materialistic life, in which they forget their eternal relation with God. [*Light of the Bhāgavata*, verse 17]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you took great risks for us. You were anxious for our welfare, although we were attached only to false enjoyment, forgetting our eternal relationship with God.

You only wanted to make us happy, to make us dance, to give us protection. You created a worldwide *saṅgha* of devotees; you gave us the shelter of Kṛṣṇa’s holy name; the right medicine of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; the holy Śrīdhām Māyāpur and Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma*; and on every continent, beautiful Deities to serve with faith and veneration.

And when visiting that holy Śrīdhām Māyāpur, what should we do? You said that every year we should come together and discuss unity in diversity. But what does that mean?

You taught us that by adding Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the diverse cultures of the world can all shine like many-faceted jewels, each in its own unique way, each differing perspective adding to the collective beauty and enhancing the understanding of us all.

You spoke of cultural conquest. But you came to uplift cultures, not to bury them!

You spoke of the East as the lame man (less skilled in work and action) and the West as the blind man (less visionary in realization and wisdom). Yet you embraced the best of both. You taught us how the two can assist each other to walk and see together, each helping to uplift the other.

As a broad-minded *mahātmā*, without discrimination you gave the absolute essence, and you did so with expertise, explaining in words and concepts just suitable for your audience’s understanding.

And you, like Lord Caitanya, invited all, without discrimination.

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The flood of love of Godhead swelled in all directions, and thus young men, old men, women, and children were all immersed in that inundation. . . . Not considering who asked for it and who did not, nor who was fit and who unfit to receive it, Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed the fruit of devotional service. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 7.25, 9.29]

By your extraordinary grace, people of all cultures all over the world are being uplifted and given access to the sweetness of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa*.

We can only pray to realize your compassion where devotional principles and spiritual *tattva* are fixed although details of time, country, and circumstance may, indeed will, vary. We pray to act in this world as your peacocks, to dance in ecstasy in the presence of the raincloud of your divine grace, to help everyone—including your daughters, granddaughters, and great-granddaughters of the future—become happy by experiencing the protection of Kṛṣṇa's divine love.

*Your servants at the Vaiṣṇavī Ministry.*

(written by Rukmiṇī Devī Dāsī)

