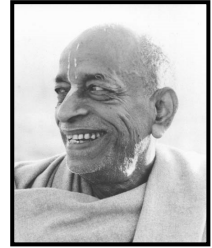




# IPM News



Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivendanta Swami Prabhupada

**JUNE 2009** The ISKCON Prison Ministry Report

**Changing Lives From the Inside Out!**

## Renewed Energy at ISKCON Prison Ministry

by Mukunda Dasa

### A Well Established Preaching Service

For the past 22 years, thousands of Inmates have had the great fortune to get familiar with Krishna consciousness through the dedicated service of many devotee volunteers. Every year, thousands of Srila Prabhupada's books are being introduced in hundreds of penitentiary institutions. With every issue of Back To Godhead magazines, hundreds of copies are sent to eager inmate readers. Japa beads, neck beads, lectures and pictures are finding their way to this "captive audience", as mother Shyama Priya used to say. For many inmates, corresponding with devotees through snail mail is the only sane or sobering contact they've had since they were incarcerated.



*Above and left, the books are transferred from Mother Shyama Priya's house Mukunda and Bhakti-lata's.*



Through the ISKCON Prison Ministry, many inmates take to the chanting of the Holy Names, to the study of the philosophy, to amazing Krishna conscious artwork, as well as to organizing programs for the benefit of other inmates in the same jail. And the inmates are not the only one benefiting from this preaching program; over the years, many chaplains have become very favorable to the introduction of Krishna consciousness in the jail where they serve and are now eager to get more books for their chapel and to accommodate

devotees coming to do programs with the inmates.

### Transition

With the recent passing away of mother Shyama Priya, ISKCON Prison Ministry's former "chief coordinator," my wife, Bhakti-lata, and I have taken on the responsibility of continuing this important, yet little known service. And although



*Above: Mukunda making wall shelves and reinforcing old bookshelves to support the weight of the books.*

much organization was needed, and still is, many improvements have been made recently and more are on the way. We now have a fully functional office, having dedicated an entire room in our home to IPM. Also, as Bhakti-lata organized books and magazines on newly renovated shelves, she prepared a complete inventory of all of Srila Prabhupada's books we have in stock. That inventory is kept current as we send and receive books. Also, since our volunteers often write from a dozen to a hundred inmates each, keeping track of even basic information can be a challenge. Things like type and number of books allowed, material already sent, and personal details can easily get mixed up or forgotten. So, to assist us in better serving the inmates, Bhakti-lata created electronic folders to keep track of all relevant information. These folders are updated with each new correspondence. Bhakti-lata works enthusiastically for IPM, 8 hours a day, 5 days a week.

### Home-Based Service

Part of the beauty of this service is its simplicity. ISKCON Prison Ministry (IPM) has always been, and still is, a home-based service. Devotees who are writing to inmates are doing so from wherever they live, be it temple or home. I like to summarize the simple and sublime nature of that service by the phrase "Changing lives from the comfort of your home." If you feel inclined to share Krishna consciousness by corresponding with inmates, we'd like to hear from you.



*Above and below: Finally, an organized office; shelved books and fully equipped packaging station.*



Reaching out to inmates and witnessing the growth of their Krsna consciousness is very rewarding. There is, however, many details one must know in order to ensure that letters and packages are not returned. We intend to compile

this knowledge, the fruit of years of experience, in an instruction manual for IPM volunteers.

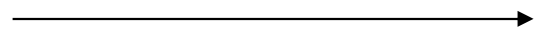
Some of the aspects of IPM also awaiting our attention are the revival of the IPM website, organized visits to the prisons, and the study correspondence courses. If you would like to receive our electronic monthly newsletter, please let us know by sending us an e-mail at [IskconPrisonMinistry@gmail.com](mailto:IskconPrisonMinistry@gmail.com)



*Above: Bhakti-lata at her desk with IPM's new laptop and printer donated by generous supporter Kamlesh Patel.*

To this day, the Ministry is operating on a shoe string budget donated by a handful of generous supporters.

Over the years, donors have felt inspired to give, in part, because of mother Shyama Priya's



## ***The Freedom Newsletter is back!***

The *Freedom Newsletter*, which was a source of inspiration for and was distributed to hundreds of inmates, had been discontinued for over 6 months. The IPM volunteer who used to put it together simply couldn't do it anymore. If you would like to see our brand new June issue, please write to [IskconPrisonMinistry@gmail.com](mailto:IskconPrisonMinistry@gmail.com) and we will send it to you.

personal and caring nature. As the dust of the recent transition settles, Bhakti-lata and I certainly intend to follow in her footsteps.

### **Inspired to Help?**

To maintain all the current activities and with much more to develop ahead, we are seeking well-wishers who feel inspired to contribute any amount on a monthly basis. Steady monthly contributions create stability and predictability which, in turn, facilitate growth. If you feel moved to contribute to this preaching program financially, please contact us to let us know of your intention. You can also send your contribution to the address below.

### **ISKCON Prison Ministry**

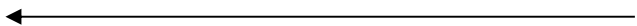
c/o Bhakti-lata dasi  
PO Box 2676  
Alachua, FL 32616-2676

or contact us at the following e-mail address or phone numbers:

386-418-3828  
386-418-0578  
[IskconPrisonMinistry@gmail.com](mailto:IskconPrisonMinistry@gmail.com)

### **Any Ideas?**

Please feel free to send us your suggestions on how you feel we can better serve the inmates and the worldwide community of devotees. We welcome your feedbacks.





## May 2009 Preaching Report !

### Srila Prabhupada's Books:

Srimad Bhagavatam set: **1**  
Big, Hardbound: **13**  
Big, Softbound: **10**  
Medium: **7**  
Small: **41**  
Booklets: **2**

### Other Publications:

BTGs: 31  
Conversations #24  
2 x Memories vol.1  
2 x Memories vol.2  
Memories vol.3  
Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna  
2 x Ganga Safari  
Life of Ramanujacarya  
Spiritual Warrior I  
The Hare Krsna Explosion  
Bhagavat Purana  
Srimad-Bhagavatam at a Glance  
Choti; The native Place of Srila B.Thakur  
Mukunda Mala Stotra  
Krsna Consciousness at Home  
Comic Book: Master of Mystics

### Other Materials:

5 Japa beads  
5 Japa bag  
4 Neck beads  
  
Tape folder #1 Bhagavad-Gita (Dravida Das)  
Tape folder #2 Bhagavad-Gita (Dravida Das)  
5 Tapes of Visnujana Swami #1  
5 Tapes Visnujana Swami #2  
4 Tapes Radha-Krsna Temple  
4 Tapes Vibhavari Sesa  
4 Tapes Krsna Meditations  
5 CDs Jagannatha Harinam Party  
3 CDs Morning Program  
MP3 Prabhupada Music & Japa  
DVD Library of Vedic Culture

## Generous Donors

IPM is a powerful preaching program, but it wouldn't be a reality without the generous support of our donors. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for the recent donations from the following supporters:

Kamlesh Patel, for donating \$1100 to buy a new laptop and printer.

Bhavananda prabhu, for his monthly donation of \$150.

Linda, from Temple of the Universe, for her monthly donation of \$150

Trivikrama prabhu, for his monthly \$100 donation.

Bhaktivedanta Archives, for donating boxes of books, tapes and a VedaBase CD.

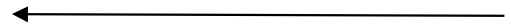
Radha-Jivana prabhu, for donating books and the shipping costs of IPM's boxes of books.

Jiva Goswami prabhu, for giving us invaluable technical support.

An anonymous devotee from Edinburg, for donating 400 BTGs every issue.

Dr. Modi, for his donation of \$200

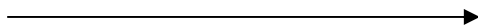
If we forgot anyone on this list, we sincerely apologize.



## Want to help?

ISKCON Prison Ministry is sustained by our supporters. You can help us change the lives of hundreds of inmates in the following ways:

- becoming a regular donor
- sending an occasional donation
- donating books, stamps, envelopes, Krishna conscious pictures
- help preparing the BTGs for mailing
- making copies of and creating cards with inmate art
- typing





## What the inmates have to say

“I took the Nectar of Devotion to school today and I got to break the ice so to speak with a classmate. Who knows, lets pray about it. At any rate, I have read only a few of Srila Prabhupada’s books and currently am in a cell with someone who shares his Gita with me. I also try to do the studies or lessons in every issue of BTG.”

Jerry Moffit

“Dear Mother Bhakti-lata,  
Thank you for writing and it was excellent to hear from you my friend! I wasn’t going to write right back but your letter and what you said about everything are so compelling that I am writing this *right* after reading your letter. I’m not even sure where to start. I actually had/have a little tearing in my eyes when I read it! And I’m not given to that kind of thing, really, but it happened. Krsna really is speaking through His devotee and it *is* like nectar just like the books say!”

Kenneth Manthei  
Corcoran, California

“Please know that the work you are doing is so very significant. It can make a life changing difference in a prisoner’s life. These teachings are so powerful. Just reading this material seems to elevate my consciousness. How much more so, practicing and applying the principles?”

I am so grateful that you folks are still able to help.”

Robert Harrington  
Sneads, Florida

“Today I got all the reading material that you sent, and was very excited after going through it, and I could tell just by scanning it that all the enclosed items contain a great deal of knowledge.

I don’t have any of the books the other devotees sent me because I read them then gave them to my neighbor. I do an excessive amount of reading.”

Jonh Paul McGowen  
Abilene, Texas

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**To contact Mukunda Dasa or Bhakti-lata Dasi:**

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