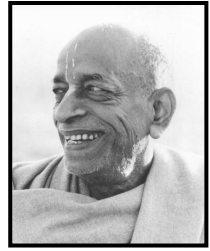




# IPM News



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

**JULY 2009** The ISKCON Prison Ministry PREACHING REPORT

**Changing Lives From the Inside Out!**

## ISKCON Prison Ministry in Los Angeles

By Bhakta David Ehler

It was in 2007 that I first came in contact with ISKCON Prison Ministry (IPM). I was scanning various devotee websites when I came across an article written by Mother Shyama Priya. The article compiled various excerpts from inmate letters and briefly described the preaching work of IPM.



I was deeply impressed by the gratitude and sincerity shown by these incarcerated bhaktas. Many were seriously taking to the process of

bhakti-yoga and were reading Srila Prabhupada's books, chanting 16 rounds, following the four regulative principles, and even preaching to their fellow inmates.

As a congregational member of the New Dwarka (Los Angeles) community, I wondered how I could help this noble cause. As I lived and worked outside the temple, I began collecting up books and sending financial donations to Shyama Priya. With great enthusiasm she would relate stories of how my contributions had helped bring Krishna Consciousness to the lives of countless individuals.

By 2008 I had met several other IPM devotees across the country like Hari Priya Dasi in Tucson, AZ and Candrasekhara Dasa. Candrasekhara encouraged me to begin writing inmates myself. Although I was initially hesitant (due to lack of preaching experience), he asked me to simply "Be their friend, and repeat the words of Srila Prabhupada and Lord Sri Krishna".

With these words, I became an active member of IPM. Over a year later, I have written to 119 different inmates in 29 states (9 states of which have no ISKCON temple and/ or rural farm community). By the mercy of Srila Prabhupada and Sri Sri Gaura-Nitai, prison preaching is taking off in Los Angeles.

In addition to regularly corresponding with inmates via mail, hundreds of books are being sent to inmates, prison chapels, and prison libraries every year. Numerous inmates are receiving subscriptions to "Back to Godhead" magazine and requests for chanting beads, neck beads, calendars, deity photos, CDs, MP3s, and DVDs are all being fulfilled.

At this year's Prabhupada Festival in Los Angeles, I showcased two scrapbooks which contained inmate artwork, articles by inmates, excerpts from inmate letters, pictures from prison preaching programs, and favorable letters from prison chaplains and librarians. IPM's service is being recognized more and more, both in Los Angeles and across the country.

But I am not content with the progress we have already made. As Shyama Priya used to say "I want an ISKCON Prison Ministry in every state!" Personally, I am trying to raise awareness of IPM's valuable preaching work and to help support those who want to engage in this service. I would like to organize some regular prison preaching programs in the Southern California area as well as assist incarcerated bhaktas who are transitioning from life inside of prison to a life of devotional service on the outside.

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Additionally, I am working with IPM devotees Bhakti-lata in Alachua, FL and Bhavananda in Arkansas. Bhakti-lata is compiling "IPM News" while Bhavananda is compiling the "Freedom Newsletter". An IPM website and inmate study correspondence courses are to follow.



By cooperatively working together, both IPM devotees and supporters can provide literally thousands of incarcerated bhaktas with all the spiritual needs they require (association, guidance, books, chanting beads, etc). Listen to what one such bhakta has to say:

"I can't explain in the appropriate words how it makes me feel when I read these books, but I can say I know it's something I want to be a part of."

Bhakta Chris  
Arizona

In a similar way, if you would like to become a part of the IPM team, please contact either myself or Bhakti-lata at:

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IPM  
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## June 2009 Preaching Report !

### Srila Prabhupada's Books:

Maha Big: 18  
Big, Hardbound: 14  
Big, Softbound: 19  
Medium: 18  
Small: 176  
Booklets: 51

### Other Material:

BTGs: 129

Spiritual Warrior I  
Prabhupada Lilamrta (one volume)  
5x Chant and be Happy  
2x Granthraj  
4x Memories  
2x Discover your self  
On chanting Hare Krsna  
Srila Prabhupada is coming!  
17x Diary of Traveling Preacher  
Mahabharata  
Journey Home  
The Higher Taste  
Krsna, Israel and the Druze  
Your Best Friend  
Simple Truth

2x Transcendental Diary by Hari Sauri  
2x Hanuman (illustrated)  
Arjuna and Abhimanyu (comic book)  
Master of Mystics (comic book)  
Ramayana  
2x Srimad Bhagavatam at a Glance  
43 Devotional Photos (of festivals, deities,  
Prabhupada, Krishna lila, etc.)  
2 Japa Beads  
2 Neck Beads  
2 CDs- Jagannatha Harinama Party  
1 CD- Bhagavad Gita in Sanskrit  
1 CD- Cintamani

## Our Donors

IPM is a powerful preaching program, and 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: Bhavananda prabhu, for his monthly donation of \$150.

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

Dwarakadhisa Dasa, CA, for his donation of \$15

Radha-Jivana prabhu, for covering the shipping costs of boxes of books.

An anonymous devotee from Edinburg, for bi-monthly donating 400 BTGs

Kamlesh Patel, for donating \$150 to sponsor Burl M. Dees to go to an art class (see a sample of his work on p.6).

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

## Want to help?

ISKCON Prison Ministry is a preaching program solely sustained by our supporters. You can help us change the lives of hundreds of inmates from the comfort of your home!

How you can help:

- Become a monthly donor; no donation is too small!
- Sponsor the bi-monthly BTG mailing for \$300.
- Sponsor the Freedom Newsletter mailing for \$100 a month.
- Sponsor mailing supplies for books and letters for \$100 a month.
- Volunteer to correspond with inmates, even just one; it makes a difference!
- Donate Krsna conscious pictures (all kinds).
- Volunteer to maintain a website.

-Donate **DVDs** and music **CDs** (all kinds)  
and, of course, **BOOKS**:

- Sets or individual volumes of  
Srimad-Bhagavatam and Caitanya-Caritamrita
- Hardbound Bhagavad-Gita As It Is
- Krsna Book
- Coming Back
- Easy Journey to Other Planets
- Brahma-Samhita
- Nectar of Devotion
- The King of Knowledge
- The Laws of Nature
- Beyond Illusion and Doubt
- Light of the Bhagavata
- Spiritual Warrior, I, II, III
- Memories volume 3
- diaries about Prabhupada (such as Hari-Sauri's)



## What the inmates have to say



“I’m currently reading the book “*Srila Prabhupada is Coming!*” by Mahamaya Devi Dasi. It is very nice reading and I can see myself inside the telling of her personal memories as I read them; as a real witness. This kind of reading adds depth to my desire to have personal face to face dealings and association with devotees.”

**Bhakta Kevin Plymouth, WI**

“There are no words to express what joy is within my heart. Material worlds mean nothing on this transcendental road... where “Back to Godhead is the theme song and Krsna prema is the goal.”

**Anonymous**

“I do not know how to thank you for these treasures. Thank you so very much for these nectarian books and magazines. They will be read and enjoyed many, many times in the months to come. All is well with me here. As I continue to seek God and chant His name, my life is improving in every way, at every level. It is very challenging to pursue *sadhana* here in this environment but to return to mundane concerns and material consciousness is no longer a viable option. I’m all in!

I now chant every day, sitting in before the pictures you sent me of Radha-Krsna. Also, I get up at 4 AM and meditate till 6 AM and then from 7 to 8 PM. Then when I go to bed at 10 PM I meditate and talk with the Lord till 12 PM.”

**Bhakta Robert, Sneads, FL**

“I really like to think about little Krsna being so approachable and playful like my little cousins. God just being a little baby is strangely compelling for some reason- it’s excellent!

Actually I’ve cooled a little on the study of IChing because it’s easier and quicker to approach the Truth directly and since Krsna is the touchstone of Truth I might as well go to Him first and Last!”

**Bhakta Kenneth, Corcoran, California**

“I was listening to a couple of other guys speaking about the ISKCON Prison Ministry; they spoke with so much genuine passion, my mere curious alerts got the best of my mind!! The next day I ran across the address of ISKCON.

At this stage of my life, I’m on a quest for truth, peace and spiritual balance. You have explained so much in this missive but more so, you spoke with vehemence and this attracts me to seek more.”

**Bhakta Shawn, Susanville, CA**

“Now, let me tell you how inmates sit on the edge of their bunks at mail time, hoping so much to receive a letter, and how they always run up to me, letter in hand, so happy and excited to receive a letter from a devotee! They don’t care if it’s written by hand or by computer. They only care that you took time to write them back.”

**Bhakta James, Salem, OR**

“I don’t have any support from my family. You all (the devotees) are my spiritual family”

**Bhakta Burl, Coleman, FL**

“I completed the “*Brahmacharya test I*” on *Bhagavad-Gita* & just sent it in to Mukta Kesa Dasa. I’m also doing the *Beyond Birth & Death* course with him.

He sent me my certificate for completing the *Nectar of Instruction* course. It makes me proud! ☺

For more information about **ISKCON Prison Ministry**, please contact:

**Mukunda Dasa** or **Bhakti-lata Dasi**

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Alachua, FL 32616-2676

**386-418-3828**

386-418-0578

I’ve been reading Krsna book at night before I go to sleep, as Mukta told me to do. I like the stories.

I also have been adjusting my rounds to avoid the 10 offenses, pronouncing all the names.

I have also gotten a few compliments from different guards lately (I guess Krsna has changed my general attitude and demeanor)

I am reading *Krsna Book*; tonight I’m on chapter 6, *Putana Killed*. I love it!”

**Paul Kimmel, Pendleton, IN**

“Yes, I have a picture of Lord Nrsimhadeva, Lord Caitanya & associates & Srila Prabhupada on a 3 way cardboard frame which I can put on my desk while I chant. I also use “medical dose-glasses” to offer water to the deities (pictures).”

**Anonymous**



**The Key to Life**

by Bhakta Burl M. Dees