



IPM News



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

NOVEMBER 2009 The ISKCON Prison Ministry Report

Changing Lives From the Inside Out!

ISKCONPrisonMinistry@gmail.com

PO Box 2676, Alachua, FL 32616-2676
386-418-3828

What's new at ISKCON Prison Ministry?

By Bhakti-lata Dasi

At IPM, every day is filled with newness as volunteers guide inmates in their Krsna consciousness. Every letter brings new questions, realizations and appreciation. Every week, letters arrive from new inmates who have heard about Krsna through their *cellie* (the inmate who share their cell), or through a book or magazine they have found either in the jail library or chapel. Lord Caitanya's mercy keeps spreading even in the prisons! One thing I can tell you from personal experience is that this service has an unlimited capacity for expansion and it is ever fresh!

New volunteers!

New volunteers have stepped up to become transcendental pen-pals:

Sri Gaurangi Dasi from Alachua, FL
Parijata Dasi, also from Alachua, FL
Srutadeva Dasa from San Diego, CA
Achyuta Krishna Dasa from Virginia

Thanks to them all for their enthusiasm in sharing Krsna consciousness with the inmates!

Website

Three devotees are currently working together to reestablish the official IPM website. We are very much looking forward to this most useful platform to share IPM news!

Inmate Newsletter

Bhavananda Dasa, from Arkansas, has taken the responsibility to do the *Freedom Newsletter*, the monthly newsletter we send inmates. This publication is very much appreciated; in the words of an inmate, "it is like a mini-BTG!"

Released Inmates

What happens once an inmate who was involved with IPM is freed? Some go on their way and we never hear from them again, or for a while, although we know for a fact that Krsna consciousness has altered their life forever, as confirmed in Bhagavad-Gita 2.40:

"In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear."

As a proof that Krsna doesn't forget one who performs some service for Him, a few inmates wrote me that they had taken to Krsna while in jail, but gave it up when released. By some unfortunate turn of events, they later went back to jail, where they once again took up hearing and chanting, this time for good.

Some inmates stay in touch even after being released, either, by phone, e-mail or snail-mail. Many engage in practical devotional service like sending a monthly donation, visiting a temple on a weekly basis, giving out books, and even getting initiated.

ISKCON Prison Ministry is a labor of love and a powerful vehicle to spread Srila Prabhupada and Lord Caitanya's compassion to those in need, and the recipients of this mercy are not only eager to get it but also very grateful for any help we can give them.



What the inmates have to say



"I have been absorbed in chanting and reading. I want to tell others about Krsna. I just don't know enough so far. I was waiting until I read more. Currently I am reading the Bhagavad-Gita as it is. I just made it to chapter 10. I have to say that I enjoy the Gita a lot. I plan to go through it a second time and keep a journal of verses and Prabhupada's purports. I was wondering how I could help spread the movement.

I have tried chanting some more. It seems to be going a lot better for me."

Bhakta Richard

USA

"I feel like I've been fighting for an eternity. Now I'm so tired; mentally, emotionally, and physically exhausted. I don't want to fight anymore.

This is why I've begun research into spiritual matters.

Anyway, I will follow your instructions on chanting."

Micheal

Jefferson City, Missouri

"Daru Brahman Dasa brought a drum and cymbals but no one knew how to use either, so he used the drum and led us through very nice sankirtan. About 20 people came."

Bhakta Gerald Niles

Graceville, Florida

"I have received the beautiful hard-cover copy of Bhagavad-Gita As It Is. I cannot tell you how overjoyed I was to receive this precious gift. It will be treasured. Thank you.

Thank you also for this association and the encouragement to chant. I am once again chanting daily and not eating any meat. I am feeling 100% better already.

I am far from being a devotee of Lord Krishna, but I do aspire to become one. Any assistance you provide in this endeavor will be profoundly appreciated. Please know that I am a serious student. I do not wish to waste a moment. Any books or materials that you may send will be treasured, studied, and read over and over.

I am looking forward to hearing from you again. I hope you will share any advice or guidance you feel may help me advance in realization. Please allow me to benefit from your knowledge and wisdom. And if there is anything I can do to be of service to yourself or ISKCON, please let me know.

Again, thank you so much for this beautiful Gita. It is already my most cherished possession here.

Thank you for all you are doing."

Bhakta Robert

Sneads, Florida

"Well, I will say my relationship with Krsna will get better; I have found inner peace with myself and am able to understand things better.

I tried chanting and felt as someone was calling me. I will do this more and more."

Jesse

USA



Preaching Report

SEPTEMBER 2009

Maha-Big: 7
Big **Hard**: 3
Big **Soft**: 11
Medium: 3
Small: 21
Booklets: 2

BTGs: 120

BOOKS from Other Devotees: 5

Other Material:

2x Japa beads and bag
Neckbead
Morning Program CD
Lecture CD
Jagannatha Harinam Party
1 Lecture CD folder
2 calendars 2006 (for pictures)

OCTOBER 2009

Maha-Big: 3
Big **Hard**: 2
Big **Soft**: 3
Medium: 5
Small: 55
Booklets: 5

BTGs: 156

BOOKS from Other Devotees: 23

Other Material:

1 Neckbead
5 tapes
1 Lecture CD

This is the activity report of Bhakti-lata and a volunteer who wishes to remain anonymous. If you are sending books and magazines to inmates, we would love to include your scores in this monthly newsletter. To get started, please contact us at: ISKCONPrisonMinistry@gmail.com or 386-418-3828



Books ready to be packaged



Books ready to be shipped!



Want to help?

ISKCON Prison Ministry has a variety of needs you can help with:

1) We need enthusiastic **pen-pal preachers**. You can write one or more inmates: if you are interested, please contact us and we will discuss it with you!

3) You can become part of our ***Adopt-an-Inmate*** program by

- becoming a regular IPM monthly donor.
- Giving an occasional or even a one-time donation (every cent makes a difference in an inmate's life).
- sponsoring the postage for the *Freedom Newsletter*: \$100 a month

5) Donate:

- **books**

All books are welcome and we especially need: *Bhagavad-Gita, Krsna Book, Nectar of Devotion, Nectar of Instruction, The Laws of Nature, Science of Self-Realization, Ramayana, Mahabharata*

- **music CDs** (no burned copies); most inmates have never heard a kirtan in their life!
- Krsna conscious **DVDs**
- Krsna conscious pictures; so inmates can look at these windows to the spiritual world.

6) We also need someone (you?) to print labels for our mailing lists!

7) Know how to type? We have a lot of quotes from inmate letters that need typing.

If you are inspired to help in any way, please contact us at:

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A Big Thank You to Our Donors!

September

Kamlesh Patel: \$150 for inmate Burl Dees' art class
(see his drawing below)

Linda, Radha and Mickey Singer: \$150

Bhavananda Dasa: \$150

Murari Gauranga: \$50

Micheal Walsh: \$10

Sridevi Dasi: \$30

Sacred Threads: shipping: \$47.37

October

Linda, Radha and Mickey Singer: \$150

Bhavananda Dasa: \$150

Sashi Raina: \$50

Sacred Thread: shipping: \$110.07

Torchlight Publishing: 8 boxes of books

Harinama Press: 6 boxes of books

Candramauli Swami: 2 boxes of back issues BTG

Balabhadra Dasa: 1 box of back issues BTG

All our preaching efforts are possible only due to the generosity of the above few donors. We are most grateful for their generosity! We also want to thank Jiva Goswami prabhu for the invaluable technical help he selflessly volunteered.



Art by Bhakta Burl Dees

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

Mukunda Dasa or Bhakti-lata Dasi
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