

Dedicated to His *Divine* Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder Acarya of the International Society of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

IPM NEWS

ISKCON Prison Ministry / DBA of Vaisnava Outreach,

“In this age, Kali-yuga, to kill the demons means to stop their demonic activities by the weapon of kirtan, Hari-sankirtan, which is spread by Lord Caitanya's associates.”

Srila Prabhupada in London, March 10, 1975

July/August 2021

I WANT KRSNA MORE

By Louis D., Raiford, Florida

The following are excerpts from a compilation of many letters written by Louis, over a few months.

Hare Krishna! Bhakti-lata Dasi, I want to thank you again for all you have done to rescue me from suffering in this material existence. I have ten months left in this solitary confinement, and I am set and determined to learn as much as I can about the Supreme Absolute Truth and His pastimes, because I want to make it my life's mission that others in my situation can experience the peace and happiness of Krishna consciousness, with freedom from fear, stress and anxiety of the world and of prison life. This age-old science answers all of life's mystery while giving freedom, peace, happiness, and showing us how to love God! It is so perfect for all

people, especially those men and women who are incarcerated and bereft of hope, and in need of love and guidance.

Prison life would be so much more peaceful and productive with Krsna consciousness available to the inmate population. I have been in the Florida DOC (Department of Corrections) for twenty years and never met a practitioner of Bhakti yoga —a Krishna conscious person. And I



have studied religion and the esoteric for those twenty years. The first time I read the *Bhagavad-Gita As It Is*, I knew I had finally found what I've always been searching for, and all the other books of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada that I have read and studied have only reinforced that notion. I've never really wanted to give up intoxicants, gambling, meat, fish, eggs, or sex but I now Hate these things!

I'm studying many books by His Divine Grace Swami Prabhupada and learning a great deal about the science of the soul, love of God, and the Absolute Truth. I pray this will qualify me to inform others of this wonderful science, without being an offender. In this science, God gives the answers to all of life's mysteries with authority and I've never felt such peace, happiness, or the love and presence of God! I must share this! Chant and be happy; in this Kali Yuga there is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way!

Bhakti Dasi, I've enclosed another approval form for the Japa beads. With the ten months I have left in solitary, just me and the Supreme Lord Krishna, I can chant 16 rounds a day and cleanse the filth from my heart and prepare me for my mission to spread Krsna Consciousness in the Florida prison system. This Krishna consciousness movement has me actually happy to be in prison to spread this science to those who need it most. I'm even blessed to be doing solitary confinement so I can learn Krishna consciousness without distractions, or interference.

All the books [you sent me] reinforced what I've learned from my Bhagavad-Gita (I study constantly), and I believe Krishna guides me. I hear through his Divine Grace's purports, I read, I pray, I remember. The book that gave me the newest knowledge is *Teachings of Queen Kunti*.

I've never been so at peace or felt so close to God. I've never felt happier, especially giving up meat, intoxicants, gambling, sex. I want to learn as much as I can so I may spread this peace and happiness to others in my situation. I can only wish someone could have shown me this path years ago. This path that does not require "blind faith". I used to feel sorry for myself, for my imprisonment, for the loss of wealth and support, the loss of my family. But Krishna has shown me I've lost all that so that I may gain Him, because in my arrogance and ignorance I would have

never sought the Absolute Truth. I'm at peace and thank God (Krishna) for my loss because the more I lose, the more I gain! Hare Krishna.

I'm currently in what is called close management (CM). It's a punishment of about two years of complete isolation, which has helped me find myself and Krishna. But I can't help to spread this message till I get off CM. I would like to use this time to get as much knowledge and growth in Krishna consciousness as I can to prepare me to help others find peace.

This is the first holiday season in some years that I have not been lonely and depressed. Thank you so much for the *Freedom Newsletter*; it answered a question I had about how to fast, and the calendars show me the Ekadasi days of the month. It was also nice to see part of my letter in this issue. I learned in the letters from other Florida inmates that I can find the audio track of His Divine Grace Swami Prabhupada chanting japa on our [electronic] tablets. Hare Krsna! And the *Back to Godhead* magazines

[I received] warmed my heart.

I pray to be able to answer others' questions and be an example of Krsna consciousness. I'm still getting distracted while chanting and I feel that japa beads will assist me greatly, by including the hand [sense of touch] and helping to focus the turbulent mind on the task. I give my respectful obeisances to Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu for prescribing this method in this age of Kali. I give my respectful obeisances to His Divine Grace Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada for bringing this science to the West and by his books being our instructional Guru. All glories to them.

"Supreme Divine Lord Krsna, I am all yours, you are my only refuge and support. Protect me, guide me, have pity on me, my Lord and kindly remove some of the Maya so I may receive guidance from within, or kill me as you see fit or wish, for I am a soul surrendered unto You."

I can't begin to tell you how much I appreciate all the support I've gotten from you and IPM. The most precious gift is the true Knowledge I've gained from the books written by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Sami Prabhupada. For if it was written by His Divine Grace, then it was spoken by Krishna as it is.



I received the wonderful Japa beads; they came right when I really, really needed them most! Krishna is always there for me! I see and sense His hand in my support and advancement always so I'm never alone anymore. Krishna says He will take care of His devotees and it is so! Which is good because I am most fallen and can do nothing independently from Him. Between Krishna always being with me and all of the support from IPM and yourself, I'm never feeling alone and lost or afraid. I've lost all my material family and so the holiday season is usually most lonely and depressing for me, but my heart has been filled with joy this season, Krsna is with me daily and every time I turn around you are sending me wonderful tools of self-realization. I feel like I'm part of a family, an eternal family, Hare Krsna.

Let me tell you a story that shows how Krsna watches over us and guides us, His hand is in everything and everywhere:

I've been moved about two months early to a less secure, level III wing. It's much more open, there are bars instead of solid doors and we can talk and pass things almost freely. Where I was before you could not hear or communicate with anyone. But with more freedom to communicate there is also more temptation, and more distractions. Firstly, it's so loud I can't hear myself think or study. Then, with us being able to pass things to others, there are illegal drugs, pornography, gang orders, etc. I've been in prison twenty years and been into the prison black market; drugs, electronics, weapons, you name it, as well as being a gang member. So I'm known, I have a name and reputation (not proud of it). So, people know me and right away I was tempted when one guy sent me



some dope and when I told him I don't do that anymore, he said; "no charge, keep it for later or sell it, get some things you need." I told him

I can't do that and sent it back. He was a little confused, but he respected my mind. I can't lie, I was not tempted to get high but, because I don't get money, I could have gotten something I really could use, food, stamps etc. with it, but I want Krsna more. Then another guy I know sent me a hard-core pornography book to use free, and I did not even look at it, I sent it back (these things are big money in

here). Then a runaround I've known for years gave me an extra hamburger tray along with my religious meal, I only ate the cookie, vegetables and bread, I gave away the meat. Right next door is one of my former gang brothers and he wanted me to help him run a football gambling ticket and tried to involve me in gang politics. Tempted by drugs, meat, sex, gambling in one day! Lord, help me.

These things tempt me. But I want Krsna more. So, I got down and prayed to Him and asked, "Why lord have you moved me to this most sinful place? It's loud and I can't study or pray, and I'm tempted with evil things. Lord, I'm most fallen and for some reason I still desire these things for sense pleasure and material lust. I can't overcome this illusion without you."



Then I realized Krsna wants me to come to Him, to turn to Him. Krsna does not test us so much as He is preparing me for what must come. He let me know that He is forging me like iron, how you temper iron into steel, to go to the open population where all these tests and problems will come. He let me know, "How can you help others if you can't be an example?" "If you turn to me, I will guide you safely." I've been getting used to these most sinful conditions and temptations and then your art calendar arrived, then my beads, just as I was wishing most for them! And they help tremendously. Hari Bol!

I know some guys will listen to me and be curious about my newfound happiness and way of life, because I've been there into all that stuff. And I know some of them are secretly desperate to find spiritual happiness and freedom, trust me, I know. If by your mercy you could send me the books by His Divine Grace, "Krsna, The Supreme Personality of Godhead", where his Divine Grace explains the tenth canto of the Srimad-Bhagavatam and Krishna's pastimes. Also *Nectar of Devotion*, His Divine Grace's book on Rupa Goswami's instructions, as I feel these books are very important to my spiritual development at this time. Thank you for all you have done for this most fallen living being.

Your servant, Louis 🌸

Chaplains' Appreciation

5/12/21

Friends, thank you for the recent shipment of books. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Chaplain Joseph E Wolfe —Huttonsville C.C. & Jail, West Virginia

5/17/21

I am writing and sending you a receipt record of the donations you sent and an inventory of all Krishna material we now have available. Thank you for your efforts to provide assistance to those of your faith tradition in our facility.

Chaplain William Burch—Prairieland Detention Center, Alvarado, Texas

Inmate Letter Excerpts

As you know, I am in the military veteran's unit. A few months ago, one of my buddies visited my living area a few times. Whenever he would visit, he would stare at the pictures on my altar, especially that of Krsna. Whenever he would do this, I would ask him 'what is up' and he would just say he was just looking. Mind you, this buddy of mine is a combat hardened paratrooper. Of course, being a paratrooper he cannot be totally sane considering he willingly jumped out of a perfectly good aircraft, fully loaded down with gear, into a



hot zone and loved doing it. 😊

So anyway, this macho warrior was again staring at Krsna's

picture and out of nowhere my buddy says: 'That blue chick is hot'. I busted out laughing and he looked at me confused. He said, 'What? She is hot looking.' This caused me to laugh even more and again he asks, 'what?!' This time with a little bit more panic in his voice. I finally managed to say, 'well, THAT blue chick is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, God, and He is known as Krsna, which means all-attractive'. I went back to laughing as his reaction was a moment of shock —well-hidden unless you knew him.

So anyway, he then begins staring again at Krsna, cocks his head and then straight deadpan says, 'Well, He's still hot', and smiles a huge grin at me.

Since my buddy was so attracted to Krsna, I gave him two of those mantra cards (with the maha mantra on the back) —one with a picture of Krsna and one with picture of Radha-Krsna. Well anyway, a few weeks ago my buddy is sorting through and packing what he was taking to go home as he was leaving that day. At one point he takes these two pictures he had put up on the inside of his locker door and said to all of us gathered nearby that he had to 'take Krsna, my hot looking God' with him.

I realized that just how attractive Krsna truly is to everyone no matter their background, even battle-hardened macho warriors like my buddy. Jaya Krsna!

David B. —Danbury Connecticut

Hare Kṛṣṇa! I fell off my practice some time ago and fell into Darkness & ignorance with almost no restraint at all. I have ruined what progress I had made and shamed myself so much. Someone recently gave me the ultimate gift; an entire set of Srimad-Bhagavatam and my heart was broken when I was faced with such a perfect mirror showing the truth of my fallen state. I have begun chanting and am attempting to reacquire myself with the regulative principles. I beg of you please help me find my way back, help me get back what I've lost. I miss the feeling of helpless love and Adoration toward my worshipful Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa
Justin W.—Amarillo, Texas

Dear Friends,

Thank you so very much for responding to my previous letter. I immediately hung up the picture of Krishna and Lord Caitanya on my wall along with the photo of Prabhupada in my locker. I read all of the material you sent me and shared it with

those also seeking to become God conscious. The maha mantra has truly been a blessing in my life and reading Vedic literature has helped me to achieve a new level of peace and serenity. So I feel it important to express my gratitude towards you and your organization. If there is any more literature you would like to share with me, please feel free to do so. Also am I able to send you any questions I may have?

Thank you all and Hare Krishna!

Andrus T. —Safford, Arizona

I am writing you to ask for assistance see I'm happy to be asking for your help, yet I do wish I had some skill or money to offer Krishna to help our cause in widening Hare Krishna consciousness.

It has been in my heart for a few months to draw for Krishna to use that skill for Krishna's enjoyment. The thing is that I am not trained, nor do I have the know-how to put words into art as I have in my heart to do out of the *Bhagavad Gita Tal Como Es*.

I read the Gita twice now. I never feel complete bliss unless I place all my attention on Krishna and that's a fact; Krishna has used His mystic powers in my life and there is no deny that Krishna is God the Supreme Personality and I notice that if I don't pay attention to Krishna, Krishna won't respond but when I do pay Krishna mind, He blesses me beyond my asking.

Hector C. —Malone, Florida

Inmate Art!

RIGHT: Drawing by Atul Kṛṣṇa Dasa



Drops of Nectar

There is another unit I have been going to now for about four months. There is an elderly ex - Christian preacher there who now considers himself non-religious and practices a mishmash of impersonalist/Buddhist philosophy. However, he read through the whole Bhagavad-Gita As It Is in 36 hours, over a span of three days. He has been regularly coming to my visits to this unit but has not started chanting or practicing Kṛṣṇa Consciousness yet.

I have been thinking that if I can put a set of Srimad-Bhagavatam in his unit then he will be busy reading it for quite some time and will hopefully become a devotee. He is sixty-five years old now and described a very vivid out of body experience he had back in 1962 wherein he actually saw the four-handed form of the Supersoul.

Sridhara-Syama dasa, volunteer with the prison ministry.

Dallas, Texas

THANK YOU to ALL our SUPPORTERS!

Your generosity is what keeps this program going! ☺ Because of a senior moment, I may forget someone, so please forgive me, and let me know so I can include your name in the next IPM NEWS. 🙏

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Anonymous (you know who you are:
thank you!)

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