

Dedicated to His *Divine* Grace  
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada  
Founder Acarya of ISKCON

## IPM NEWS

ISKCON Prison Ministry / DBA of Vaisnava Outreach, Inc.

*“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*

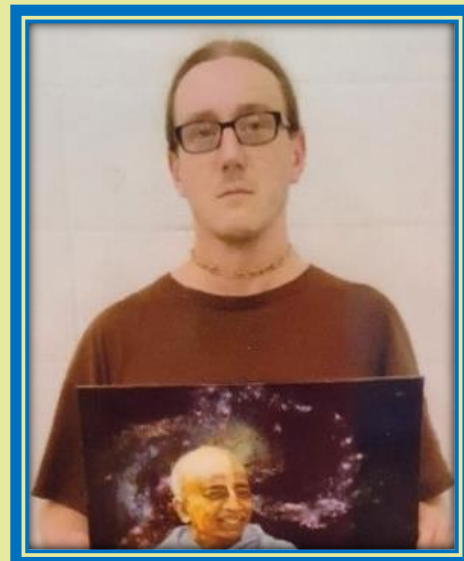
**Sept/Oct 2021**

## EVERYONE IS LOOKING FOR KRSNA

More reflections from David B. — Danbury, Connecticut

**W**hen I got the Covid19 I felt physically terrible with severe joint pains, chest pain and uncontrollable shivering. Yet, I was so at peace, and not only did I manage to chant my twenty rounds every day but even during the worst I spent all my waking time chanting the maha mantra, grateful for such suffering and the focus it gives to what matters and all the mercy Krsna so kindly bestowed.

I was thinking back to the “old” me years ago and how much I have progressed. Observing others around me, I see that both staff and inmates alike really struggle with just being in the moment and



not letting their senses and emotions control and dictate how they interact with, not just others, but also themselves.

I can see I am much more at peace with everything. Seeing it all as neither good nor bad (equanimity) and seeing below the material surface to see the jivatmas. This time Kṛṣṇa has helped me to not only be able to not feel stressed, anxious, or frustrated but also to help those around me with my calming energy. I have not mastered it yet, but I can see myself getting stronger at it and that I am at my best when I am chanting and reading a lot of scriptures.

I notice some days, no matter how I try, I cannot seem to get into my “spiritual groove”. In my morning services I find my mind sometimes distracted by the mundane, during bhajans I too don’t “feel it” and the more I try to bring my mind back it rebels like the bad monkey mind it is at times. Yet I have come to realize that in doing so I am upset due to my separation and inability to connect and “see” what I usually see and feel when offering such service to the Lord and His



associates. Thinking back on what I have learned from the sastras, I can see how this only intensifies my desire to do more, offer more, dedicate myself more and love Kṛṣṇa that much more in the time I can associated without my monkey mind acting up.

I see that the more I talk on a spiritual level with others the more I am given even chances to talk on spiritual matters and that it only increases exponentially.

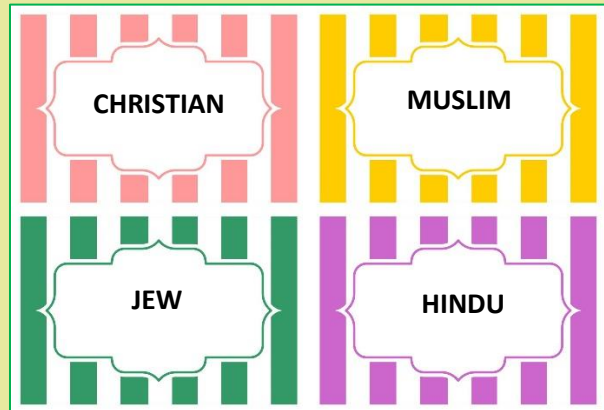
I can see how, if I become strong enough in preaching and I set aside the mundane, that such opportunities are limitless thanks to Kṛṣṇa’s mercy!

I can see how asking Kṛṣṇa for “my daily bread” is foolish and is actually a sign of lack of devotion to Kṛṣṇa. While it is not a business transaction between myself and Kṛṣṇa (He would go bankrupt if He was an ordinary person with the way He does business), I find that the more I praise Him to

others, discuss spiritual matters, and devote my life to Kṛṣṇa, that He blesses me with resources to keep me strong physically and mentally, and provides me opportunities to be of some small service to Him and His associates.

Due to the lockdown for the past few months, I also now have more time to read and strengthen my ability to preach to others His glories, and all this expands without limit. Jaya Kṛṣṇa!

For a while now I have noticed how I was not preaching and also struggling with balancing my duties in the mundane with my devotional practices, and I was seeking how to rectify the issue. I was begging sincerely for Kṛṣṇa to re-engage me in His service. I came to realize that all I had to do was act from the soul and to stop looking at others as Christians, Muslims, Catholic/Protestant, faithful/unfaithful, etc.



Everyone is looking for Kṛṣṇa, whether they realize it or not, and no matter a person’s current faith/designations, they all can be and should be talked with on such nectarean subjects which are so joyful. It amazes and enlivens me every time it happens, especially when it is with the most materially unlikely of persons.

I now make it a point to seek out such connections and I am learning that any mundane conversation can be turned at any moment to spiritual matters.

I have come to understand finally that the reason we get frustrated and upset is because we have plans and try to control that which is not ours to control. When my efforts to play God was thwarted I would get upset at the players involved in the situation, not considering that they, like me, were at the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and what Kṛṣṇa wanted. Since I quit trying to be the controller, I have been able to accept everything just as it is, knowing that there is no good or bad situation, but all due to Kṛṣṇa’s

mercy. There are so many people around me trying, like I used to do, to control, and, when that fails, they spend so much energy and precious time in futility and only make their life worse.

I am hoping to get more involved with the Christians, Muslims, and Jews (as they see themselves) and build upon the steps I have already begun in the interfaith discussions, and help others develop deeper devotion and love for Kṛṣṇa and, in doing so, also help myself do so too. Hare Kṛṣṇa!

Even during this lockdown, Kṛṣṇa has provided the resources for me to be able to offer some nice prasadam of laddus, lime cheesecake, and a rice dish, to many in my unit, in celebration of Lord Nṛsiṃha's appearance day. It is always wonderful to see how such changes in the energy of those who eat prasadam, and it only encourages me to reciprocate even more. Thank you Kṛṣṇa for allowing me to offer You such service.

Talking to quite a few Christians, I got to realize just how special and complete is the Vedic system Srila Prabhupada gifted to all of us. Unlike the Christian faith process, which, after talking with Christians of varying degrees of knowledge and devotion, I have found to be imprecise in how to develop bhakti for God, the Vedic system gives a step-by-step scientific process. The beauty, as I see it, of the sanatana-dharma system is that it does not matter what labels one and/or society place on a jivatma's material body and illusions on the mind—this is scientific process that can be used by all and, if followed, will get the results as presented. It is amazing to me to see such proof too, as I know of at least one devout Catholic here who has not only

read the Bhagavad-gita, but, since it helped him in his faith so much, he has now also begun reading the Srimad-Bhagavatam, and I am sure that after that he will read the Caitanya-caritāmṛta too, if given the chance and time. He did not have to “convert” at all but just deepened his own faith and still is very much a Catholic by his own label. Sure,

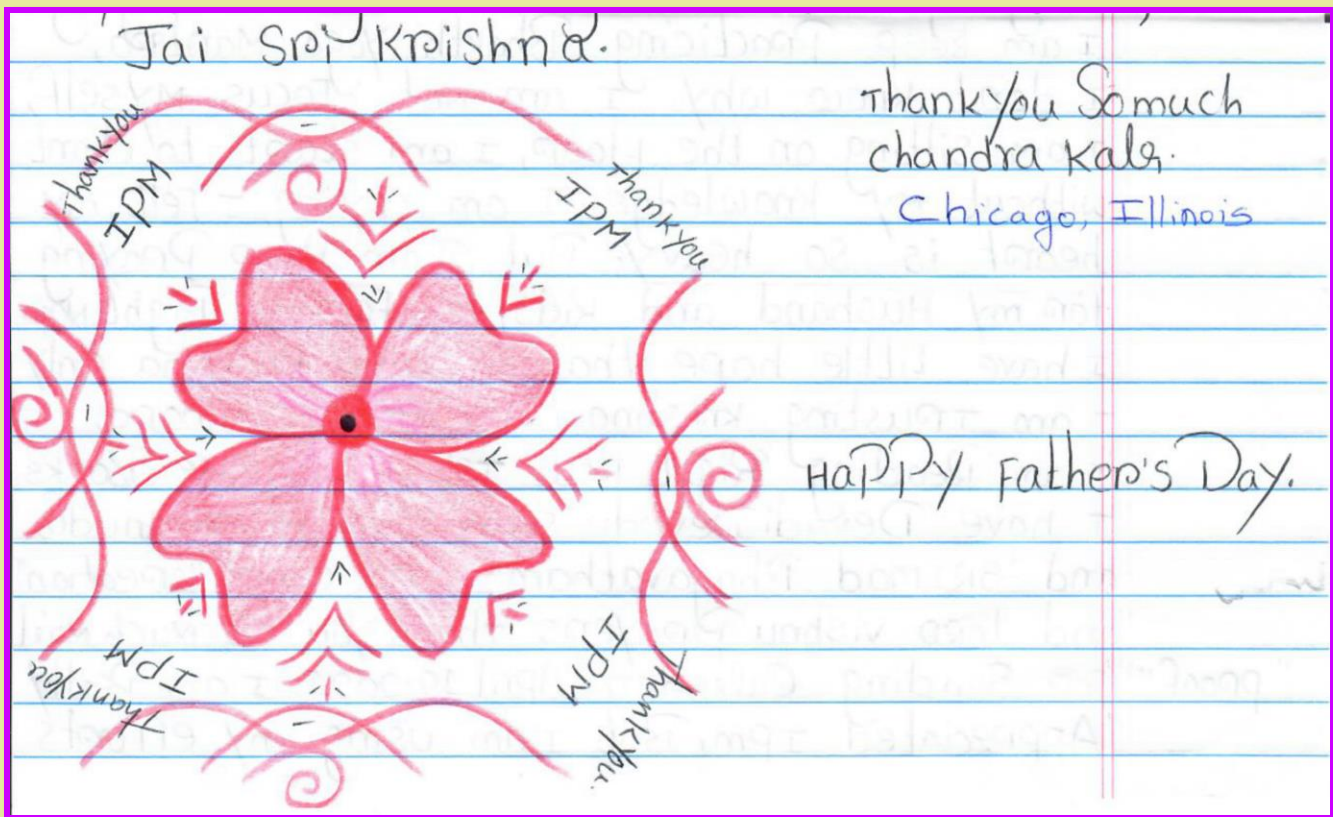
still being attached to such a label some might say he has not fully embraced the teachings, but I see it that at least, through Kṛṣṇa's mercy, the seeds have been planted and I am sure that in time they will grow into a beautiful Bhakti vine.



Other Christians I have talked to have admitted the lack in their scriptures for such knowledge of who God really is and how exactly to love Him. Some even are against organized religion for such reasons and yet, I see them seeking for what their intuition says is there, even if by maya's arrangement they have forgotten such knowledge.

I too am learning so much from these interactions and my devotion to Kṛṣṇa grows with each ecstatic discussion and I am always gladdened to help others in deepening their faith in and love for Kṛṣṇa. You can just see the glow of energy radiating off that person, the smiles, the peacefulness, and the compassion that before they did not have, and I know also that, by Kṛṣṇa's mercy, I too am ecstatic and glowing. In doing so they and I transcend the prisons of the world, even if for just a little while, and even a second of that time, I have come to realize, is greater than hours of engaging the senses in the greatest of mundane pleasures of the material world. 🌸





ABOVE: Appreciation from inmate Chandra Kale —Chicago, Illinois



### CHAPLAINS' APPRECIATION

We have been placing your materials on carts for our population to enjoy. Thank you so much for all you have sent us.  
**Maureen O'Gorman - Library**  
**Wyatt Detention Facility**  
**Central Falls, Rhode Island**

Thank you so much for the DVD, the exquisite Cantos of the Srimad-Bhagavatam and the extra miscellaneous literature. All is received whole and intact. Your generosity is boundless and deeply appreciated. May Krishna grant you the fullness of all his blessings, the freedom from all fear and utter confidence of his peace, and the sheer joy of his presence beside and within you!  
Blessings, Peace and Joy!  
**Chaplain Dave Rink**  
**Chippewa Correctional Facility**  
**Kincheloe, Michigan**

## WARNING: NECTAR AHEAD! —By Bhakti-lata Dasi

In 2016, I had some mantra cards made for the inmates. For the last 5 ½ years, a couple of these cards have been inserted in *each* outgoing letter as well as in *each* book packages. For the last couple years other volunteers have started doing the same. As a result, the prison system is now *flooded* with these mantra cards. Inmates love them very much and they love sharing them with others; when they talk to others about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they have something *concrete* they can give them. It also makes it easy for everyone to remember and learn the maha mantra. These mantra cards are mentioned in a wonderful story of the July/August issue of IPM NEWS, in the inmate excerpts section. Below are the pictures used for each of the three kinds of mantra cards, with the accompanying maha mantra in the back of them.



Chant and Your Life will Be Sublime!

Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna  
Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare  
Hare Rama, Hare Rama  
Rama Rama, Hare Hare



Chant this mantra:

Hare Krishna  
Hare Krishna  
Krishna Krishna  
Hare Hare  
Hare Rama  
Hare Rama  
Rama Rama  
Hare Hare

and your life will be sublime!



## Inmate Letter Excerpts

Hola Ms. Bhakti Lata Dasi. Sadly yes, I knew that devotees do not eat meat [but was still eating it]. But I think my Karma? or my ignorance? or I don't know how explain it I was so submerged in the Kali yuga? Only thing I can tell you is [that] when I was eating meat I was feeling like I was doing something terrible. I felt bad. I was thinking when I get out of prison I turn vegetarian and honestly, what if I never get out? I was always excuse [excusing] my senses and desires doing what I not supposed to do. Thinking that prison do not have the protein my body needs and all that was nonsense. I feel way better then I used to when I ate a poor kill animal. I feel the power through this body when I work out and I feel my mantra with more power and concentration. When I finish chanting, I can stay quiet all day. I can think much better, read with more attention. I can think before I say something in much different angles. Bottom line: I never want to eat meat again. I see it now like a very cruel and bad thing. Like killing a human being and eat it like a zombie. That's my opinion. Thank you for answer me so fast and thank you for ask me about my spiritual walk Ms. Bhakti Lata Dasi I hope one day we can chant together and eat prasadam and I can be a member of a temple and do what you do; that's my biggest dream. I just want to serve Krishna Hare Krishna. Your humble servant,  
**Bhakta Eloy M. —Wewahitchka, Florida**

Thank you for your services and for the positive and absolutely wonderful change your books and magazines have brought to my life. I read the Bhagavad-gita As It Is from cover to cover and have started again.

**Brindel S. —Ocala, Florida**

I like to read about Krishna, his pastimes, and miracles, also about reincarnation and the spiritual word. I have faith in him but in my

situation I need much faith and miracles, I know I'm a servant from Him but sometimes I get tired of this life (I been down for 10 years) without any kind of support from my family that is in Mexico (Guadalajara, city). Therefore many times I'm frustrated and filled with fear and despair.

**Guillermo R.N. —Indian Springs, Nevada**

Just in the beginning of March three people were killed at my prison, so we have been on a commissioner lockdown all month. But yes, I've recently been released from being in the isolation units. After six years! It's such a blessing to be able to walk among my peers again!

It's such a blessing to read the Srimad-Bhagavatam! I'm already on Canto four. I started back over and began reading all the commentary as well. I want to memorize the *Songs Sung by Lord Siva* to Krsna, They are so beautiful!! I never realized how boundless Srila Prabhupada's knowledge and wisdom was until reading the Srimad-Bhagavatam, I am amazed!!

I've just finished my 16 Rounds today. I feel so great! May you be protected by the Mercy of Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead, and not be afflicted.

**Dale D. —Oglethorpe, Georgia**

The Freedom Newsletter [the monthly newsletter for the inmates] is so full of wisdom, compassion, and philosophy. It gives me plenty of Kṛṣṇa's love and the strength to continue fighting maya. I'm still following with discipline, the regulative principles, with the exception of coffee once in a while, which I'll probably leave alone soon. I try to chant at least three to five rounds a day, counting on my fingers as we're not allowed beads in SHU.

[solitary confinement]

**Jose A. —Ray Brook, New York**



# 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. 🙏

## Our donors since last newsletter:

Kusuma Janardhana Dasi  
Mark Barnett  
Inmate Kesava Priya Dasi  
Inmate Robert Foust  
Inmate Ayil Nayee (stamps)  
Inmate Jonathan Jackson



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

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