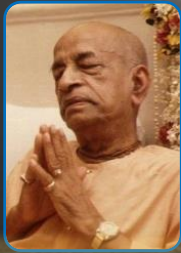


Freedom Newsletter



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

ISKCON Prison Ministry / November 2021

PO Box 2676
Alachua, FL 32616

COLLEGES FOR CURING THE SOCIAL BODY

This exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and some of his disciples took place in Vrndavana, India, during March of 1974.

Srila Prabhupada: In this age the politicians' business will be to exploit the poor citizens, and the citizens will be embarrassed and harassed so much. On one side there will be insufficient rain and therefore scarcity of food, and on the other side there will be excessive taxation by the government. In this way the people will be so much harassed that they will give up their homes and go to the forest.

Atreya Rsi dasa: Nowadays the government simply collects money and does nothing.

Srila Prabhupada: The government's duty is to see that every person is employed according to his capacity. There should be no unemployment—that is a very dangerous situation in society. But the government has drawn people off the land and into the cities. They have made the consideration, "What is the use of so many people working on the land? Instead we can kill animals and eat them." It's all very easy—because they don't care about the law of *karma*, the inevitable results

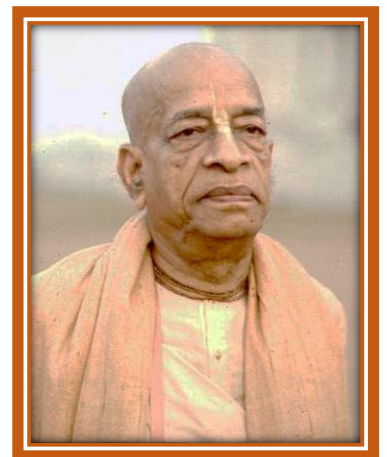
of sinful activities. "If we can eat the cows, why should we take so much trouble to till the land?" This is going on all over the world.

Atreya Rsi dasa:

Yes, the farmers' sons are giving up farming and going to the city.

Srila Prabhupada:

You know this nonsense of "topless, bottomless"? The leaders want that. They want the hotels to pick up college girls and let them be enjoyed by the guests. All over the world the whole population is becoming polluted. So how can people expect good government? Some of the people



will take charge of the government, but they are polluted. So wherever we have a Hare Kṛṣṇa center we should immediately establish a college for training people—first, according to their natural talents (intellectual, administrative, productive, and laboring). And everyone will be elevated to spiritual awareness by performing the spiritual activities we prescribe—chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, hearing the science of self-realization from *Bhagavad-gīta*, and doing everything as an offering to Kṛṣṇa. Everyone’s life will become devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

At the same time, for the management of practical affairs we have to organize and train the different social divisions, because there are different kinds of brains. Those who have very intellectual brains should become *brahmanas*—priests, teachers, advisors. Those who are fit for management and protection of others should become *ksatriyas*, administrators and military men. Those who are fit for producing food and taking care of the cows should become *vaisyas*, mercantile men. And those who can assist the others and take up trades and crafts should be *sudras*, workingmen.

In the social body, just as in your own body, there must be divisions of work. If everyone wants to be the brain (the intellectuals) or the arms (the administrators), then who is going to act as the belly (the farmers) or the legs (the workingmen)? Every kind of occupation is needed. The brain is needed; the arms are needed; the belly is needed; the legs are needed. So you will have to make the social body organized. You have to help people understand the Supreme Lord’s natural social divisions: some people will work as the brain, others as the arms, others as the belly, and still others as the legs. The main aim is to keep the social body perfectly fit.

You must make sure that everyone can engage in the kind of occupation he is suited for. That is important. The thing is, every kind of work can be devotional service to the Lord—the main point is to see that people are engaged in that spirit in their natural work. For instance, when you are walking, your brain is working—”Go this way; go that way; a car is coming”—and your brain says to your legs, “Come to this side.” Now, the work of the brain and the work of the legs are different, but the central point is one—to get you safely across the street. Similarly, the central point of the social body should be one—everyone should help in serving Kṛṣṇa.

Srila Satsvarupa dasa Goswami: Will this kind of college be for the general public?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, for anyone. For instance, an engineering college is open for everyone; the only

requirement is that people must be ready to take up the training. This is our most important program now, because people all over the world have been misguided by these so-called leaders. Children can attend a Kṛṣṇa conscious primary school, and then, when they are grown up, they can attend a Kṛṣṇa conscious college for further development in their occupational work and their devotional life.

Atreya Rsi dasa: Will we teach business, also?

Srila Prabhupada: Not this modern business—no.

That is rascaldom. “Business” means that you produce enough grain and other crops so that you can eat sumptuously and distribute to everyone—men and animals (especially the cows)—so that they will become stout and strong. That way the cows can supply milk and the human community can work hard, without suffering from disease. We are not going to open mills and factories. No.

Yadubara dasa: Srila Prabhupada, what class do the arts and crafts come under? In our society today artists and musicians are accepted as philosophers.

Srila Prabhupada: No, an artist is a workingman. At the present moment your colleges and universities are giving too much stress on the arts and crafts. Therefore the whole population is workingmen. No real philosophers, no wisdom. That is the difficulty. Everyone is being drawn by the attraction of getting a high salary. They take a so-called technical or scientific education and end up working in a factory. Of course, they won’t work in the field to produce crops. Such people are not philosophers. A philosopher is one who is searching out the Absolute Truth.

In your Western countries the rascals are writing about the philosophy of sex, which is known to the dog. This kind of philosophy can be appreciated by rascals, but we do not appreciate it. Someone who is searching after the Absolute Truth—he is a philosopher. Not this rascal Freud—elaborating on how to have sex. In the Western countries the people have all become low-class, and Freud has become their philosopher. “In the jungle, the jackal becomes the king.” That’s all.

What is the actual knowledge in this so-called Western philosophy? The whole Western world is struggling along for industry, for making money—”Eat, drink, and be merry.” wine and women. That’s all. They are less than low class. This is the first time the attempt is being made to make them human beings. Don’t mind that I am using very strong words—it is a fact. They are animals, two-legged animals. Rejected men. Vedic civilization rejects them as the lowest of the low. But they can be reclaimed.

Westerners can be reclaimed, just as you Westerners—my students—have been reclaimed. Although you come from the lowest situation, by training you are becoming more than *brahmanas*. There is no bar to anyone. But unfortunately, these rascals do not agree to accept this opportunity. As soon as you say, “No more illicit sex:” “no more meat-eating,” they become angry. Rascals and fools. As soon as you give them good lessons—education—they become angry. If you give a snake

nice milk and banana, the result is that he will simply increase his poison. But somehow, by Krsna’s grace, you are becoming trained. You become trained and revise the whole pattern of Western civilization, especially in America. Then a new chapter will come in. This is the program. Therefore Krsna conscious colleges are required. 🌸



AN EXEMPLARY LIFE OF DEVOTION

HUMBLE 93-YEAR-OLD DEVOTEE INSPIRES SINGAPORE CONGREGATION BY HIS EXAMPLE

By: Prakash Govindan das

Kandarpa Koti Krishna Das is not a Ph.D. holder in Vaishnava studies, neither is he a famous millionaire businessman, nor will you find a famous YouTube or Facebook channel in his name, nor is he the GBC or the temple president of his local ISKCON temple. Yet, if you have the good fortune of attending any program at the Gauranga center in Singapore, you will find that all the senior and junior devotees will go to this endlessly kind man and they will touch his feet to take his blessings. This is not just because of his wonderfully advanced age of 93 years; it is also a reflection of the Vaishnava stature at which he is held in the heart of the devotees.

In a recent celebration of the disappearance day of Madhavendra Puri (a Vaishnava Acharya from the 14th century BC who performed physically difficult services when he was greater than 90 years old), the local GBC representative, Devakinandan Das, extolled Kandarpa Koti Das as Singapore’s own Madhavendra Puri. “Kandarpa Koti is showing us that age is only a number and that unmotivated and incessant devotional service



can be rendered unto Krishna at any age. Everyone in our congregation is very inspired by him.”

Always Serving The Devotees And Never Seeking Recognition

You will also find that this unassuming man, who worked for 45 years in the public works department of Singapore, is always serving the devotees. He regularly advises people that “serving others is the way to true happiness in life”. For example, if you are visiting the local center for the first time you are likely to receive charanamrita (water that has bathed the Lord in the morning) from Kandarpa Koti himself. He is also likely to offer you a seat and say a kind word to welcome you. Visitors have never left the center without receiving some kindness from Kandarpa Koti. This is the experience of all the devotees in the Singapore congregation.

Even though he is more than qualified to, Kandarpa Koti has never given a Bhagavatam class on a festival day or sung the kirtan at Janmashtami. Temple



authorities say that Kandarpa Koti Das has never sought any recognition or fame for his many services at the center.

Regulated habits are the key to a long life

When questioned about his secret to a long and successful life, Kandarpa Koti says “regulated, clean habits, and including bhakti in every aspect of life, is the key.” For instance, every week 3-4 times, for four hours starting with Mangala Arti at 5 am, Kandarpa Koti performs deity services at the Gauranga center. After these services, you can see him sit down at the temple hall and in his beautiful cursive handwriting, he takes notes about what he reads in Srila Prabhupada’s books.

An early start to spiritual life

Kandarpa Koti Krishna was born in the town of Nagapattinam (in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu) in 1928, to a father who was a scholar of the Kambha Ramanyana, Mahabharata, and other Vedic texts. At a young age he was taught these scriptures in the Tamil language by his father. Even today, if you approach him and request it, he will sing beautifully and spontaneously from these teachings.

Endurance in the face of adversity

After having migrated from India to Singapore in 1952, Kandarpa Koti faced many adversities including losing a child at a young age. He faced financial hardships early in his life in Singapore, and more recently his wife passed away after 62 years of marriage. Yet there seems to be not a trace of resentment or regret in this devotee. When questioned about how this is possible, Kandarpa Koti says that “when one is in devotee, constantly associating with other devotees and living a Krishna Conscious life, one understands that adversity and fortune are two sides of the same coin. They are both mercy of the Lord”. 🌸

Gratitude drives his service

When Kandarpa Koti speaks on Srila Prabhupada and his spiritual master (Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaja), a tear comes to his eye out of gratitude. Even despite so many years of service to Krishna, he has not forgotten that only by the mercy of a pure devotee can one get access into devotional service of the Lord.

When asked what his advice to ISKCON’s youth is, Kandarpa Koti says, “please hold dear the gift given to us by Srila Prabhupada and further his mission. Use this human life for devotional service as it is very rare. It is not to be wasted.” 🌸



Drops of Nectar



" As soon as you become fully surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, you are liberated. (...) Simply you have to change the consciousness, that "Henceforward I shall act only as directed by Kṛṣṇa." That's all. You are liberated. It is one minute..."

Morning Walk -- January 4, 1977, Bombay

STORIES FROM THE SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM

THE GENEROSITY OF KING RANTIDEVA

Though he was nearly dead from hunger and thirst, King Rantideva shared his food and drink with beggars.

From the ninth canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam —translation and commented upon by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. (Adapted by Drutakarma dasa.)

For himself, King Rantideva was always satisfied and depended completely on the Lord's providence. At the same time, when guests came to his palace the generous king would personally look after their every comfort, as if it all depended not on providence but on him. Once King Rantideva fasted for forty-eight days, but he never complained or made any attempt to get food. On the morning of the forty-ninth day, he received a sizeable quantity of well-prepared food. But just as he was about to take his meal, a learned *brahmana* priest arrived as a guest.

King Rantideva was very advanced in spiritual knowledge, so he could see that the Supreme Lord Krishna dwells in the heart of every living being. As a result, he received his guest with faith and respect and gave him a share of the food. The *brahmana* ate to his satisfaction and went away.

Now King Rantideva again prepared to break his long fast, but just as he was about to take his first bite, a low-class laborer entered the palace. King Rantideva could also see Krishna dwelling in the heart of this *sudra*, so he gave him a portion of the food as well.

After the *sudra* had gone away, a bearded and bedraggled man surrounded by a pack of dogs arrived before King Rantideva. "O King," he said, "my company of dogs and I are very hungry. Please give us something to eat." With great respect King Rantideva gave what was left of his food to the dogs and their master.

Now only some drinking water remained, and there was only enough for one person. When the king was just about to drink it, a *candala* (a dog-eater, the lowest of men) appeared before him and said, "O King, although I am lowborn, kindly give me some drinking water."

Touched by these pitiable words, the good-hearted King Rantideva said, "By offering water to maintain the life of this poor *candala*, I shall not be the loser—by this act of charity I shall free myself from all hunger, thirst, fatigue, and illusion.

The ravages of hunger and thirst had brought King Rantideva to the verge of death, and yet he gladly gave even his last drop of water to the



wretched *candala*. Because King Rantideva saw everyone as part of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he never distinguished between the *brahmana* and the *sudra*, the poor and the rich. Such equal vision is called *sama-darsinah* (*panditah sama-darsinah*). One who has actually realized that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is situated in everyone's heart and that every living being is part of the Lord does not make any distinction between the *brahmana* and the *sudra*, the poor (*daridra*) and the rich (*dhani*). Such a person sees all living beings equally and treats them equally, without discrimination.

Just then Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, and other great demigods appeared before the king and revealed that it was they who had disguised themselves as the *brahmana*, the *sudra*, the *candala*, and the man with the dogs, just to test him. The demigods were very pleased with King Rantideva and wanted to bestow great wealth and opulence upon him. But the king had no desire to enjoy such things. He simply wanted to keep his mind focused on the lotus feet of Lord Krishna

and render devotional service unto Him. Rantideva knew that Krishna is the eternal master of all the demigods and that the demigods' gifts are temporary—they pass away with the passing of time. A pure devotee, King Rantideva cared only about his eternal loving relationship with the Supreme Lord.

Srimad-Bhagavatam goes on to explain that everyone who followed the principles of King Rantideva became a pure devotee of the Lord, equally freed from the effects of material suffering. Just as a runner trains for a

marathon, we can train ourselves toward this enormous generosity of spirit by practicing compassion in our daily lives. True compassion comes by understanding the intimate spiritual connection all living beings share with the Supreme Lord. No one, no matter how fallen he or she might appear externally, is without such a relationship. When one performs kindness with this understanding, the act becomes more than pious duty—it becomes a source of the deepest pleasure. 🌸

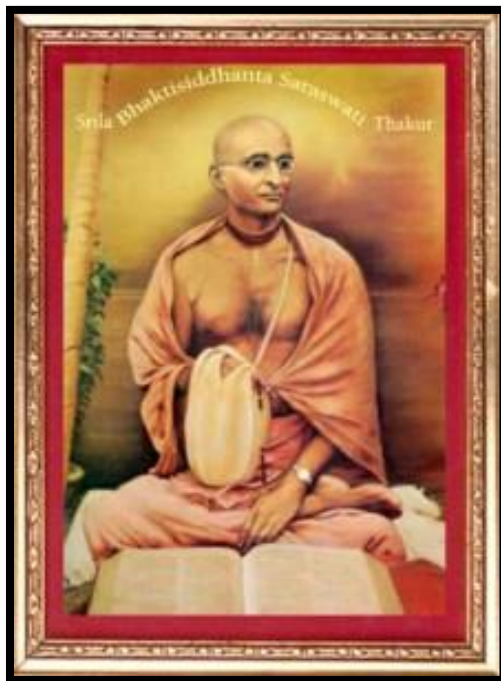


LIFE of PURE DEVOTEES

Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur

Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, the guru of Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, appeared in Sri Ksetra Dhama (Jagannatha Puri) on 6 February 1874 as the son of Srila Sacidananda Bhaktivinoda Thakura. In his childhood he quickly mastered the Vedas, memorized the Bhagavad-gita, and relished his father's philosophical works. He became known as "The Living Encyclopedia" for his vast knowledge.

He preached convincingly against casteism and philosophical deviations from Gaudiya Vaisnavism. He tried to unite the four Vaisnava sampradayas by publishing their teachings. Srila Sarasvati Thakura earned the title Nrisimha Guru for his fearless and powerful delivery of the Vaisnava siddhanta. Mayavadis would cross the street to avoid confronting the "lion guru." Besides being a courageous preacher, he was ornamented with all divine qualities and full of ecstatic love of God. He established 64



Gaudiya Math temples in India and centers in Burma, England, Germany.

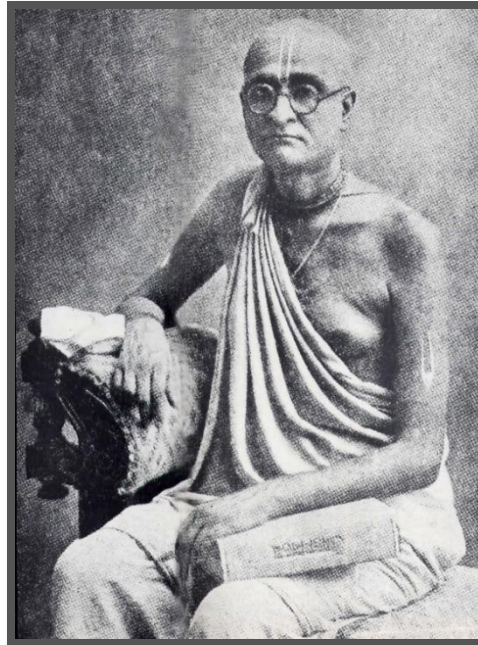
Srila Sarasvati Thakura excavated Lord Caitanya's appearance place at the Yogapitha in Sridhama Mayapur, despite heavy opposition from the money-hungry caste Goswamis of Navadvipa. He built a beautiful Gaudiya Math temple there.

His three "Brhat-mrdangas" (printing presses) in Madras, Calcutta, Krishna-nagara used to pump out books, magazines, and newspapers to spread the message of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu.

When asked why he printed a daily spiritual newspaper entitled Nadia Prakash, Srila Sarasvati Thakura replied, "If an insignificant city can produce five daily newspapers, then why can't we publish a newspaper every 'Second about the eternal, ever-fresh transcendental activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His unlimited spiritual planet, Goloka Vrindavana?'"

Apart from his father's writings, he published many authorized sastras: Bhagavad-gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, Caitanya Bhagavata, Caitanya Mangala, Prema-bhakti-candrika, and his favorite book Sri Caitanya-caritamrta. He predicted that foreigners would learn Bengali to relish the nectar left by Srila Krishna Dasa Kaviraja in the Caitanya-caritamrita.

He introduced many innovations to expand preaching. All over India he staged free theistic exhibits and dioramas depicting the pastimes of, Sri Krishna and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Employing the latest technology, he even had animated dolls. To commemorate the many holy places visited by Lord Caitanya he installed marble impressions of the Lord's lotus feet. Breaking tradition, he let his sannyasis wear tailored kurtas and overcoats, ride in cars and motorboats, and carry Mahaprabhu's message across the sea to Europe. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati's revolutionary preaching ideas sprang from the sastric principle of



and showed thousands how to attain pure love for Sri-Sri Gandharvika-Giridhari (Radha-Krishna).

Aside from his phenomenal preaching success in India, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura's greatest contribution was Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (above), whom he initiated and inspired to distribute Krishna consciousness all over the world.

When Srila Prabhupada was asked to describe his spiritual master Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, he said, "What can I say? He was a Vaikuntha man. (...) When my Guru Maharaja was present even big, big scholars were

afraid to talk [to him, even]with his beginning students. My Guru Maharaja was called "Living Encyclopedia", he could talk with anyone on any subject. He was so learned—so we should be like that as far as possible. And no compromise. So-called saints, avatāras, yogīs—everyone who was false was an enemy to my Guru Mahārāja. He never compromised. Some Godbrothers complained that this preaching was a "chopping technique" and it would not be successful. But those who criticized him fell down.

(...) For my part I have taken up the policy of my Guru Maharaja—no compromise. All these so-called scholars, scientists, philosophers who do not accept Kṛṣṇa are nothing more than rascals, fools lowest of mankind etc.. 🌸



ABOVE: Sri Chaitanya Gaudiya Math, Mayapur, India

yukta-vairagya set forth by the rasa acarya, Srila Rupa Goswami. Being an eternally liberated soul, Srila Sarasvati Thakura knew how to perfectly engage Maya (the illusory energy) in the service of Lord Krishna. Following Srila Thakura Bhaktivinoda's footsteps, he preached daivi varnashrama to harmonize society and provide spiritual fulfillment for all. Advocating the teachings of Sri Rupa and Sri Raghunatha Dasa Goswamis, he taught the science of devotional service,



ABOVE: Srila Prabhupada was ordered by his Guru to preach Krishna Consciousness in English. And he fulfilled that desire.

Excerpts from inmates' letters

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 answering me so fast and thank you for ask me about my spiritual walk. 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

When 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 where 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 jiva atmas and this time nature 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 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 such only intensifies my desire to do more, offer more, dedicate myself more and love Krsna that much more.

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

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

I can see how asking Krsna for "my daily bread" is foolish and is a sign of lack of devotion, actually, to Krsna. While it is not a business transaction between myself and Krsna (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 Krsna, the more 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 of the past few months I also now have more time to read and strengthen my ability to preach His glories to others and all this feeds into greater and greater joy, without limit. Jaya Krsna!

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 Krsna to re-engage me in His service. I came to realize that all I had to do was act from the soul and stop looking at others as Christians, Muslims, Catholic/Protestant, faithful/unfaithful, etc. Everyone is looking 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 is so joyful.

It amazes and enlivens me every time it happens, especially with the most materially unlikely 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 were 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 Krsna wanted. Once I quit trying to be the controller I was able to accept everything just as it is, knowing that there is no good or bad situation, but that everything is due to Krsna's mercy. There are so many people around me trying, like I used to do, to control and, when that fails, they expend 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 helping others develop deeper devotion and love for Krsna and in doing so also help me do so too. Hare Krsna!

Even during this lockdown, Krsna 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 Nrsimha's appearance day. It is always wonderful to see how such changes the

energy of those who eat it and it only encourages me to reciprocate even more. Thank you Krsna for allowing me to offer You such service.

Talking to quite a few Christians I got to realize just how special and complete the Vedic system Srila Prabhupada gifted to all of us really is. Unlike the Christian faith process which, after talking with such Christians of varying degrees of knowledge and devotion, I have found imprecise in how to develop bhakti for God, the Vedic system gives step-by-step scientific process. The beauty, as I see it, of the sanatana-dharma system is such 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 and, since it helped him in his faith so much, he has now also begun reading the Srimad-Bhagavatam and I am sure he will read the Caitanya-caritamrita 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 as at least through Krsna's mercy the seeds have been planted and I am sure in time 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 Krsna grows with each ecstatic discussion and I am always gladdened to help others in deepening their faith and love for Krsna. You can just see the glow of energy radiating off that person, the smiles, the peacefulness and compassion that they did not have before, and I know that, by Krsna'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 I have come to realize that even a second of that time is greater than hours of engaging the senses in the greatest of mundane pleasures of the material world.

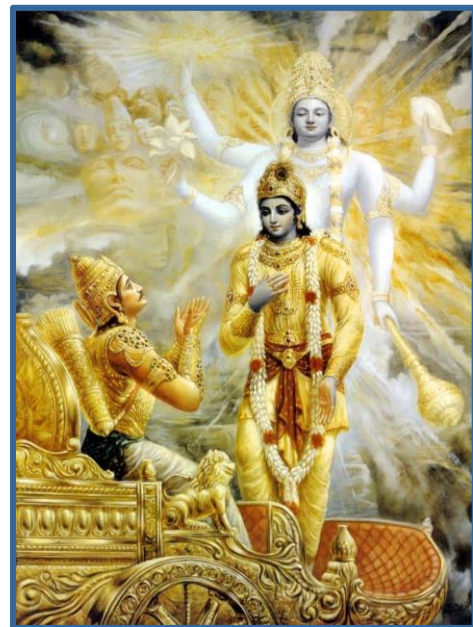
David B. —Danbury, Connecticut



Calendar

NOVEMBER 2021

- 01 Nov 2021 - **Rama Ekadashi**
05 Nov 2021 - Appearance Day of Rasikananda
05 Nov 2021 - **Govardhana Puja**, Go Puja, or Go-krda
06 Nov 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Vasudeva Ghosh
08 Nov 2021 - **Disappearance Day of Srila Prabhupada**
12 Nov 2021 - Gopastami, Gosthastami
12 Nov 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Gadadhara Dasa Goswami
12 Nov 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Dhananjaya Pandita
12 Nov 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Srinivasa Acharya
15 Nov 2021 - **Utthana Ekadashi**
15 Nov 2021 - Disappearance Day of Srila Gaura Kisora Dasa Babaji Maharaja
15 Nov 2021 - Bhisma Pancaka
18 Nov 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Bhugarbha Goswami
18 Nov 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Kasisvara Pandita
19 Nov 2021 - Krsna Rasayatra
19 Nov 2021 - Tulasi-Saligram Vivaha
19 Nov 2021 - Appearance Day of Sri Nimbarkacharya
19 Nov 2020 - **Last Day of Caturmasya**
20 Nov 2021 - Katyayani Vrata Begins
30 Nov 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Narahari Sarakara Thakura



ABOVE: In the course of speaking the Bhagavad-Gita, Lord Krishna shows His universal form to Arjuna.

DECEMBER 2021

- 01 Dec 2021 - **Utpanna Ekadashi**
01 Dec 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Kaliya Krsnadasa
02 Dec 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Saranga Thakura
09 Dec 2021 - Odana Sasthi
14 Dec 2021 - **Moksada Ekadashi**
14 Dec 2021 - Advent of Srimad Bhagavat-Gita
19 Dec 2021 - Katyayani Vrata Ends
23 Dec 2021 - **Disappearance Day of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura**
30 Dec 2021 - **Saphala Ekadasi**
30 Dec 2021 - Disappearance Day of Sri Devananda Pandita



ABOVE: Left to right: Lord Baladeva (aka Lord Balarama); Lady Subhadra (Their sister); and Lord Jagannatha (aka Lord Krishna).

WHAT IS ODANA SASTHI?

At the beginning of winter, there is a ceremony known as the Odana-shashthi. This ceremony indicates that from that day forward, a winter covering should be given to Lord Jagannatha. That covering is directly purchased from a weaver. According to the arcana-marga, a cloth should first be washed to remove all the starch, and then it can be used to cover the Lord.

Purport —Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, Madhya Lila, 16.18