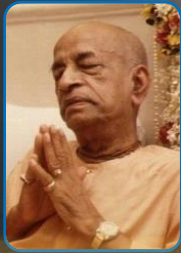


Freedom Newsletter



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

ISKCON Prison Ministry / February 2023

PO Box 2676
Alachua, FL 32616

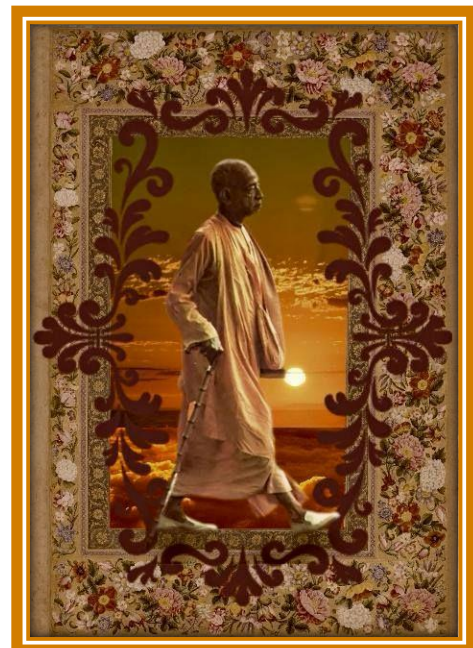
WHY DO THE HARE KRISHNAS SEEM SO STRANGE?

This exchange between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada and reporters took place at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, on March 5th, 1975.

Reporter: Swamiji, what special message would you have for people who don't know anything about your movement and would like to know something about it?

Srila Prabhupada: It is a little difficult to understand this movement because it is a spiritual movement. Unfortunately, people have practically no information about what spirit is and what a spiritual movement is. They can simply understand that the body is there—but the body is a machine, and the driver of the machine is the spirit soul. So we are beginning our movement from this platform. People are very much engrossed with the machine only, but they have no information about who is driving the machine. That is what we are teaching.

Reporter: Swamiji, your movement has received much attention because many of your followers dress in what, for the West, is an odd fashion. Why have you asked your followers to dress in this fashion and play drums on the streets?



Srila Prabhupada: This is our preaching method—somehow or other to draw people’s attention, so that they may have the opportunity to revive their eternal relationship with God.

Reporter: I’m sure that you’re aware that to many people in the West, your disciples seem strange because of the way they act on the streets. What about that?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, they must seem strange, because they are acting spiritually. To materialistic persons we are surely acting strangely.

Reporter: Is this manifestation the only way to be spiritual?

Srila Prabhupada: No, there is much more. For instance, we don’t have any illicit sex; we don’t have meat-eating; we have no intoxication; we have no gambling.

Reporter: But I mean, Swamiji, is this manifestation—dressing in this fashion, playing drums, and dancing in the streets the only way to be spiritual?

Srila Prabhupada: No. We have published about seventy books [Srila Prabhupada’s translations and commentaries on the Vedic literatures]. If you want to learn about this movement through science and philosophy, you have got our books. Have you not seen our books?

Reporter: Yes, I have, but—can’t people be spiritual without dressing in this fashion and dancing in the streets?

Srila Prabhupada: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. You can become spiritualized in the clothing you are wearing now. You simply have to learn about spiritual life from the books. Dress is not a very important thing. Still, in the material world one person is dressed in one way; another, another way.

Reporter: The way we ordinary people dress lets us move in all circles. But the way your disciples dress ...

Srila Prabhupada: The thing is, to signify that one is performing a particular job, he may dress differently. For example, a policeman is differently dressed, so that others can understand that he is a policeman. Similarly, we are also differently dressed, so that everyone may understand that we are Hare Krsna people.



Second Reporter: Swami, I saw a television program about your movement once, and they said that the men give the directions and the women follow. Is that true?

Srila Prabhupada: Not necessarily. We follow the *Bhagavad-gita*, the directions of Lord Krsna. That is applicable to both men and women. Naturally a woman requires protection by a man—in childhood she is protected by her father, later she is protected by her husband, and in old age she is protected by her eldest sons. That is natural.

Second Reporter: That goes against the thinking of a lot of people in America now. Do you know that?

Srila Prabhupada: In America, maybe. But this is the natural situation. Women require protection.

Third Reporter: Swamiji, is there a chance that all your followers can realize the highest truth?

Srila Prabhupada: They already have.

Third Reporter: They already have?

Srila Prabhupada: Certainly, and I can deliver it to you, also, if you want. The highest truth is that God is a person, like you and me. Now, what is the difference

between this one person and all the rest of us? It is this: He maintains all of us, and we are maintained by Him. But He is also a person, like you and me. Do you follow?

Third Reporter: Yes, I do.

Srila Prabhupada: So my disciples have already realized the highest truth. Otherwise, why would they be following a teacher like me? I am a poor Indian man. Why are they following me? They are American—they are rich. So how could I have bribed them? These young people are educated, qualified. Why are they following me, unless they have already realized some higher knowledge?

Fourth Reporter: Swamiji, I have one more question for you, please. It seems to me, and I think to other sympathetic observers, that you have asked your spiritual children to go deep within the heart of the Krsna consciousness movement to accomplish what you’ve set as their goal. But as far as I know, they do not work in, for instance, hospitals or perform service to the “outer world” other than offering free meals at the temple and preaching the word of Lord Krsna.

Srila Prabhupada: Many of my disciples work at ordinary professions, of course. But do you know what real service is?

Fourth Reporter: The answer should come from you and not from me.

Srila Prabhupada: Suppose you open a hospital. You can cure some disease for the time being, but can you give a patient any assurance that he will not die? Can you protect him from death? In spite of all your big hospitals,

can you protect humanity from death, from birth, from old age, from disease? Can you?

Fourth Reporter: Physically, of course not. Only spiritually.

Srila Prabhupada: So we are providing that—the process whereby one can return to the kingdom of God, where there is no more death, no more birth, no more old age, and no more disease. 🌸



LORD NITYANANDA'S PASTIMES

The Deliverance of Jagai and Madhai

Five hundred years ago, Sri Krishna descended as Caitanya Mahaprabhu, in His most merciful incarnation, to deliver the fallen souls of Kali yuga. Principal amongst His associates was Lord Nityananda, Who was none other than Lord Balarama, the incarnation of Ananta-sesha. Even though Caitanya Mahaprabhu distributed the love of Godhead freely to anyone willing to partake, Lord Nityananda was more merciful and gave His mercy even to unwilling, sinful and atheistic people like Jagai and Madhai

One day Lord Caitanya instructed Nityananda Prabhu and Haridasa Thakur to go to every one's house in Nadiya and request them to chant Krishna's name. The two great devotees eagerly set forth and began to knock on each and every door with the request, "please chant Krishna's name, worship Krishna and teach others about Krishna." They were happily received by the pious people, while the envious would blaspheme them. Completely unconcerned by favorable or unfavorable reactions they proceeded around the town.

In Nadiya there lived two very sinful brothers called Jagai and Madhai. Though they were born in pious Brahman families, by bad association they had become meat eaters, drunkards, thieves, arsonists, and murderers. There was no crime that they had not committed, including the most abominable sin of killing cows and Brahmans. The entire town was terrified of these two persons who seemed to be the very personification of all sinful activities.



On the day Nityananda Prabhu and Haridasa Thakur were moving in the town, these two brothers, completely intoxicated, were alternatively fighting and embracing each other. After observing them for some time, Nityananda Prabhu compassionately decided to deliver them and thus approached them.



Despite the warnings of the town people Lord Nityananda and Haridasa Thakur, approached the two drunkards instructing them to chant the holy name of the Lord. Hearing these words, the two sinners looked up and, seeing the two saintly figures, roared in anger.

They leapt up and ran to catch the two sannyasis. Playing their pastimes, the two devotees fled at the sight of the attacking brothers. Apparently terrified they shouted, "Krishna! Save us!! Govinda!" and ran. While running, Haridasa Thakur playfully proclaimed that all this trouble was because he was in the company of a troublemaker, a charge that Nityananda Prabhu hotly denied. In this way, pursued by the

cursing Jagai-Madhai, Lord Nityananda and Haridasa Thakur, laughed and ran. They finally disappeared into the home Srivasa Acarya, leaving the bewildered brothers searching for them in vain.

In the meantime, the two brothers began to reside near the Ganges River where Caitanya Mahaprabhu bathed. Constantly drunk, they started harassing the devotees. At night, they could hear the sounds of the kirtans coming from the house of Srivasa Acarya and, in a drunken stupor, they would playfully sing and dance with the melody. In this way, unbeknown to them, they were getting purified by this chanting.

One day while Nityananda Prabhu was returning in the dark, He was accosted by the two brothers. On learning His identity, Madhai became furious and struck Him with a broken earthen pot. When Jagai saw the blood flow from the wound, he became compassionate and restrained Madhai from striking a second time. While Nityananda Prabhu patiently stood, looking at the brothers with compassion, tolerating the pain and humiliation, people ran to tell Caitanya Mahaprabhu about the incident.

Hearing that Nityananda Prabhu had been hurt by the brothers, Caitanya Mahaprabhu ran towards them with the intention to kill them. He summoned His Sudarshan chakra (His personal weapon in the form of a fiery disk that can kill instantly) which looked like death personified to the two terrified brothers. [see picture above] Nityananda Prabhu quickly intervened and begged Caitanya Mahaprabhu to not kill the brothers. He reminded Him that His mission was not to kill sinners but their sins, by giving them love of Godhead. Thus appeased, the Lord took back His chakra.

Nityananda Prabhu told Caitanya Mahaprabhu that it was Jagai who had saved Him by preventing Madhai from attacking Him again. Hearing this Caitanya Mahaprabhu said to Jagai, "Lord Krishna be merciful to you. By protecting

Nityananda, you have purchased Me. You may ask any desire you have in your heart. From today on you will have pure love and devotion for Krishna," Hearing this Jagai fell at the feet of the two Lords and grasping the feet of Caitanya Mahaprabhu wept.

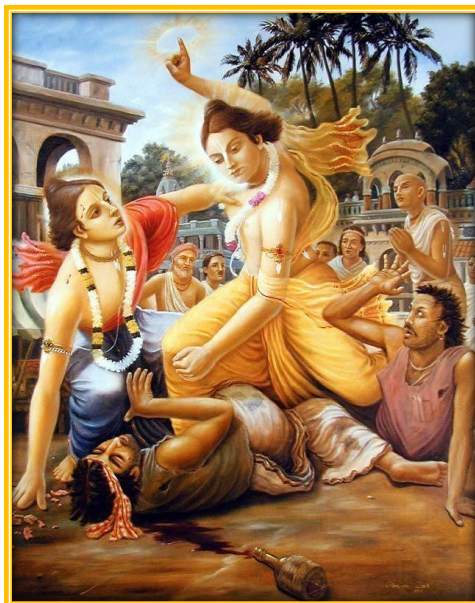
Seeing the wonderful transformation in his brother, a remorseful Madhai begged for the mercy of the Lord. However, since he had committed the worst of all offenses, that of attacking a Vaishnava, the Lord did not even consider all his pitiful pleas for mercy. Only after Madhai grasped the feet of Nityananda Prabhu and received His mercy that Caitanya Mahaprabhu agreed to deliver Madhai also.

Having received the mercy of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Lord Nityananda, both the brothers became completely transformed. They would chant 200,000 names of the Lord every day (about 115 rounds), offer everyone humble obeisances and constantly berate themselves for their past sinful activities. Madhai in particular was very remorseful at the fact that he had caused physical harm to Nityananda

Prabhu and would shed many tears for this. Finally, he approached Lord Nityananda and begged for some act of atonement. The compassionate Lord assured him that he was completely forgiven, but if he wanted to atone for his other past sins then he could build a ghat (bathing place) on the banks of the river Ganges to help people take a bath.

Madhai enthusiastically built this ghat, which still exists with the name of Madhai-ghat. He was always there, humbly offering any and all services to devotees. He would also beg forgiveness from everyone who came there, not knowing whom he had hurt in the past while intoxicated. In this way the two brothers spent the rest of their lives singing the glories of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and

Nityananda Prabhu. People were amazed by their radical transformation, which bore witness to the extraordinary power of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityananda. 🌸



ABOVE: Jagai and Madhai, as pure devotees of the Lord.

A NEW SENSE OF FREEDOM

By Bhakta Andrus T. —Inmate in Safford, Arizona

I want to formally thank you, and everyone involved in your prison ministry program. You have provided a means for incarcerated souls to break free from the bondage of self [the false self; the false ego]. What started out as an inquiry about life after death led me to a new sense of freedom, one made possible through the service of great souls, like yourselves. Many people who seek Krishna in here rarely seek Krishna outside of prison, as Srutadeva Prabhu would say, but you can rest assured that I will be participating in temple duties in both Chandler & Tucson [once released].

The magnitude to which your service has gone on to help extends far beyond myself and to elaborate I'd like to tell you my story, which if you like have permission to publish in any newsletter.

My spiritual journey began in November 2018 with a search to discover what happens after death. I read many books that didn't click until my sponsor in AA gave me *The Science of Self-Realization* by Srila Prabhupada. Finally, something made sense and I began to read more from Prabhupada. Jesus says that ye will know the truth when ye hear it, and I certainly could feel I was reading something genuine and truthful.

Shortly after I began reading the *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*. In 2019 I decided to write you myself and was given Srutadeva Das as my pen pal. I was able to ask questions and learn much more about the Vedas. I was blessed to receive the Back to Godhead magazine, Freedom Newsletter, and many books, including the Mahabharata. For a while I was the only bhakta on the yard. Then, in early 2021, I saw another inmate meditating and began a conversation. He was involved in Buddhist Monasteries on the streets and so we shared interest in Eastern philosophy. We later became good friends, and I gave him my pen pal's address and a few books to read (including the Mahabharata). Now there are two bhaktas on the yard, enough to register with the chaplain, for services.

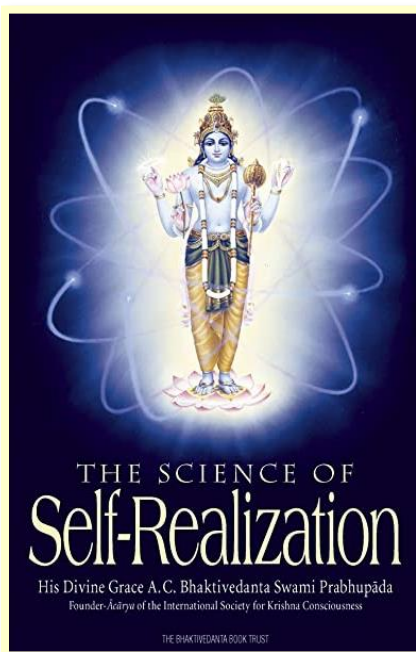
At this point I had read the Gita four times and the Mahabharata from cover to cover. People on the yard knew what I was about and knew me from the classes I teach or taught, such as Morning Meditation, A Path to Virtue, and Redefining Success. My release date was coming, and I couldn't let this yard be devoid of Krishna. I went around the yard to those I knew were spiritual seekers and asked if they would be interested in studying the Gita.

I compiled a list of seven people who were interested in learning more. I wrote to Balabhadra Dasa in Boise and told him my idea to start a study group here and asked his opinion. He said it was an excellent idea and he poured out his energy into helping us get this thing started. About three months later, the seven inmates interested in study received their Bhagavad-gitas and two more books as well. Bhakta Wes and I now lead a Gita study group every Saturday.

What's more is that I also reached out to the Tucson temple to see if they would be interested in volunteering service here at Graham. I got in touch with Sandamini, the temple president, and she sounded very sincere and interested. I linked her to our complex chaplain and soon there will be a community of Krishna Consciousness inmates to attend Kirtan and further their study in the presence of devotees.

What seemed impossible at first, started to become very real. This yard was completely void of Krishna Consciousness less than three years ago and now we have a community of seven inmates studying the Gita, with volunteer devotees on their way. If Srila Prabhupada can start a global movement with nothing, surely a sincere inmate can gather a group of inmates in prison for a higher purpose.

I ready myself for release now feeling like I did something to make a difference. The Krishna Consciousness that began here will continue in my absence and for me there is no greater joy. Hare Krishna! Jaya! 🌸



Lecture Excerpt

WE ARE SERVANTS OF KṚṢṆA

—From a lecture by Srila Prabhupada on SB 1.3.1 —Vrindavan, November 14, 1972

Therefore, Kṛṣṇa says that sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja [Bg. 18.66]. That means the so-called faith, you should give up. It is a faith. "I am Hindu." "I am Muslim." "I am Christian." Or "I am this," "I am that." This is a kind of faith. You are neither Hindu, neither Muslim nor Christian; you are servant of Kṛṣṇa. That is real characteristic. And actually, we are servant. We are serving. That is our characteristic. Either he may be Hindu or Muslim or Christian, but the real business is that everyone is serving. It is not that because I am Hindu, I don't serve. Or because one is Christian, he doesn't serve. No. Everyone is serving. But he's serving māyā [illusion]. He's serving kāma [lust], krodha [anger], lobha [greed], mātṣarya [miserly]. He's serving. In this material condition, we are serving our whims, kāma. Sometimes I become angry, and I serve my anger—I beat others. That means I am serving anger. I am serving my lust. I am serving my greediness.

So we have become, instead of becoming servant of Kṛṣṇa, we have become the servants of our, these enemies. Practically they are enemies—kāma eṣa krodha eṣa rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ. Or in other words, we are servants of the three material modes of nature. But we are servant. That we cannot deny. So the whole Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is that instead of becoming servant of these three modes of nature, you become servant of Kṛṣṇa. That is your original position. You cannot give up your position as servant. 🌸

WORDS of Gratitude from a Ukrainian Refugee

By Yuliia Mudrak

My name is Yuliia Mudrak, [I am an uninitiated devotee], I am 25 years old, and I am from Ukraine. Before the war, I lived in Kyiv and worked as a certified preschool teacher. Unfortunately, many devotees had to leave their normal life in Ukraine due to the war. But at the same time, we've been able to see wonderful examples of devotees in other countries, who show great concern for us Ukrainian devotees.

For the first two days of the war, I stayed in my apartment close to the temple. However, when it became too unsafe, I, like many other devotees who lived near the temple, went to live in the very large temple in Kyiv, so it was a good idea to move there at that time. We lived there as a big family for several days, and every time the air raid siren went off, we went down into the basement until it was safe to emerge

again. Very often during those times, we would have kirtan, so with the company of devotees, even war has its bright side.

One evening, Acyuta Priya Prabhu said that it was now also too dangerous in Kyiv and he advised us to evacuate. So, the next day the Deities, as well as the brahmachari and the brahmacharini ashrams were evacuated. Almost all the devotees left the temple that following morning.

I decided to go to Poland. First, we went to Lviv together with a few other devotees and we were all received so nicely at the temple and spent the night there. The next day I arrived in Warsaw. One devotee took us to the Warsaw temple, and we stayed there for three days. During this time, I had the good fortune to do some service and also meet Mataji Nareshwari, who lives in the



temple and serves the Deities. She put a lot of effort into taking care of us, and I am very grateful to her for that. Shortly after that, I saw an announcement that the Vaishnava community at the Almvik Farm in Sweden was inviting Ukrainian devotees to serve at their temple. This was being arranged through the ISKCON Relief Team. I called the contact number and Mataji Saraswati Gopi who is the ISKCON Relief Coordinator for Sweden answered the phone. When I heard her voice, I just knew I should go there, so on the very same day I went via ferry to Sweden. After 18 hours we arrived on the shores of Sweden.

The next day I and three other young refugee devotees were picked up at the port by Narada Prabhu, a young devotee who lives in the Almvik community. On the way there he said that we were going to a wonderful place, and I can confirm, after five months of my stay here, that he was absolutely right!

Almvik is about 50 km south of Stockholm, located in a beautiful forest. Immediately after our arrival, Saraswati Gopi, Lalita Sakhi, Krishna Bhakti, Shri Prada, and Kamala Priya Matajis began to take care of us with incredible dedication. They helped us settle down and provided us with all our necessities. Similarly, many other devotees helped us so much while we were there. Sometime after our arrival, Kamala Priya and Saraswati Gopi Matajis arranged to take part in an EU-funded Erasmus+ volunteer project that operates here in Almvik. This is a project for European youth, and it includes services in the temple and community, language learning, excursions in Sweden, and even sewing or art workshops. All these fit into 32 hours a week. So I signed a Volunteering Agreement for two months. The mentor and coordinator of the volunteering project are Mataji Kamala Priya.

During my time as a volunteer, I served as a pujari assistant, cooked breakfasts and dinners for the devotees, kept the temple clean, and babysat for eight hours a while the mother was doing service. I visited many places of sightseeing in Stockholm, visited a Waldorf-school and

their nursery kindergarten, and also the ISKCON temple in Korsnäs which is not so far away. I also sewed a nice gopi dress as part of a project with the support of Mataji Krishna Bhakti. Also, while living in Almvik, I was able to attend morning and evening programs, and several times I was able to attend Harinamas in Stockholm. The volunteer project also helped me financially so that I could buy clothes and other necessary things, pay for my ticket to fly to London, and in addition give some monthly pocket money.

Throughout my stay in the Almvik community, the devotees helped me solve all the difficulties that arose and took great care of me. In particular, when I had health problems in April, Mataji Kamala Priya, Saraswati Gopi, and Jivakesha helped me to overcome them and repeatedly made appointments with doctors and drove me several times to a specialist in Stockholm.

During this time, I met Mataji Lalita Sakhi from London. She came with her husband Shyamasundara Prabhu for a week to visit the Almvik community. She told me about



Yuliia, wearing the gopi dress she sewed herself, received her certificate as an EU Volunteer from Kamala Priya Devi Dasi.

the legendary Bhaktivedanta Manor temple, and I really wanted to visit there. Lalita Sakhi then said that I could come to England under the assistance program for Ukrainians and stay at her house, not far from the temple. Mataji Inna who is the ISKCON Relief Coordinator for the UK helped me a lot to obtain a visa. She does a great service, coordinating the British and Ukrainian devotees so that they can find each other.

Last week, on June 21st, Mataji Kamala Priya drove me to the airport, and I flew to London. Mataji Lalita Sakhi and Shyamasundara Prabhu kindly received me at the airport and brought me to their home. They are taking great care of me now and helping with all the paperwork and adaptation.

We do not know when the war in Ukraine will end. I hope it will happen as soon as possible. For now, I want to make good use of my stay here in England. Now my plans are to work at the Manor gurukula (school). My work will be to help the Ukrainian children adapt to English-

speaking society and help them with translation. I will also do service at the temple, attend the programs, and improve my own English skills.

All glories to all the devotees who are helping the Ukrainian devotees! 🌸

Gold Nugget!

"You are searching out friends to talk with, to joke with, to love. Kṛṣṇa is sitting there for that purpose. If you love Kṛṣṇa, if you make friendship with Kṛṣṇa, if you love Kṛṣṇa, then your life will be successful. You haven't got to search out any other friend. The friend is already there.

Either you are a boy or a girl, you will find a nice friend within yourself. That is yoga system, when you realize this friend. So this friend is so nice, as soon as you become little inclined to hear about Him, sṛvatam sva-kathah — about Kṛṣṇa, not any other nonsense talks, simply about Kṛṣṇa -- then Kṛṣṇa will be so pleased. He is within you."

Lecture of Srila Prabhupada on the Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Adi-lila 17.21 – June 7, 1969, New Vrindavan

FOOD FOR LIFE HUNGARY -Christmas Love Feast

By Gandharvika Prema Dasi, Iskcon Hungary | Jan 01, 2023

Christmas Love Feast – Thousands of families rely on help in the present times of crisis. Food for Life Hungary, the humanitarian aid arm of ISKCON Hungary, has organized food distribution events all over the country on a daily basis for the last thirty years. Although the present difficult economic situation affects the content of aid parcels and the number of portions is also affected, the devotees do not give up and will organize the Grand Christmas Love Feast.

Every charity and social care organization faces a challenge from the energy crisis and food inflation. This is also shown by the results of the largest food collection initiative in Hungary, in which Food for Life also took part. Those who continue to donate despite the difficulties deserve the greatest respect.

“The Christmas Love Feast has a message. Stopping organizing it would mean that we give in to the difficulties and give up our duty. Is there a crisis? Well, it is one more reason to find the means and go ahead with the festive distribution against all odds!”— says Bhakta Vatsala dasa, the chairman of the Food for Life Foundation.



The devotees distribute a daily amount of 3000 food plates for the needy, large families, the elderly, the jobless, and the sick in Hungary. The need is going to mount. An increasing number of people in the queue are those who still have an income, and can still pay for their bills, but after having paid for the utilities, medicines, the rent, they are left without the means to buy enough food for their families.



ABOVE: Hungry crowd waiting in line in front of the **Food for Life Center**, to receive prasadam (sacred food) and a food parcel.

The Food for Life Charity Program played an important role during the COVID pandemic in helping people who suddenly lost their

livelihood and now, at the time of the conflict in Ukraine, they have played a key role in feeding the refugees from Ukraine. They also helped the food relief program of the devotees in Ukraine, by sending foodstuffs to the parts of Ukraine bordering Hungary from where the devotees further the cooking ingredients to other parts of Ukraine.

This resource of food is also important from the point of view of environmental protection, however sorting, transporting, and storing them required additional resources. The charity has to find the means to buy the cooking ingredients going into the Christmas aid parcel itself.



LEFT:
Hundreds of liters of food are being prepared in FFL kitchens all over Hungary every day.



LEFT:
Bhakta Vatsala Dasa, the chairman of FFL Hungary.

In the autumn of 2022, the energy and food crises started to bite. The hiking prices represent a huge challenge for the aid services. For instance, Food for Life alone has had to pay 12,000 USD more, just for petrol for the trucks this year. However, saving foodstuffs from being discarded and distributing the prepared food is impossible without trucks. Although they cook in their large-scale kitchen for needy people, the foundation cannot avail of the capped prices reserved for individual citizens, they must pay inflated prices for the flour or cooking oil used. Some of the ingredients underwent a price hike of over 100% during the last few months.



ABOVE: *Food parcel given by FFL as a Christmas present for the needy.*

Sour cream, which is an important ingredient of Hungarian-style pottages, has become a luxury now and can be used exclusively because of the kindness of donors. It must be mentioned also that some enterprises that used to assist FFL in the past have gone out of business because of the crisis and can no longer support food distribution.

As Food for Life Foundation is performing a public service, it can avail of a normative government subsidy. Even in a large-scale, efficient kitchen, the ingredients for a portion of cooked food require at least double that amount. The add-ons to the plate of cooked food like bakery items, raw vegetables, fruit, and the like come from supermarkets where items near the end of their shelf life are donated to charities.

“We had to completely reconsider the food parcel distribution during the festive season. We can only purchase the so-called capped-price ingredients at full market price, therefore this year we will include other useful and healthy items in the parcel, like rice, canned food, pickles, etc. We are very thankful to some of our donors who offer large quantities of basic ingredients or delicacies. Financial contributions are also very helpful!” – says Bhakta Vatsala dasa.

The special food distribution events this year started on December 3rd, were held in eight different locations of the country, and will end on 26th December in Budapest. In total, Food for Life Hungary will distribute about 6000 portions of cooked food and give 4500 parcels among the needy during the festive season.

“We will again spend our time at Christmas on the street, just as we did in the last 30 years,” says Gandharvika Prema, the spokesperson of ISKCON Hungary. “We understand from the many messages asking for help that there is a surge of people who still have a kind of basic livelihood, but they need our help, especially in the countryside. For instance, our branch at Eger has been

receiving a flood of people asking for aid in the last four months. In such a crisis, only large-scale solidarity can help.” 🌸



ABOVE: *Group of volunteers after food distribution in Budapest, Hungary.*

Calendar

FEBRUARY 2023

- 01 Feb 2023 - **Bhaimi Ekadashi**
02 Feb 2023 - Varaha Dvadasi
03 Feb 2023 - Nityananda Triyodasi – Appearance Day of Nityananda
05 Feb 2023 - Appearance Day of Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura
11 Feb 2023 - **Appearance Day of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura**
11 Feb 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Purusottama Dasa Thakura
17 Feb 2023 - **Vijaya Ekadashi**
17 Feb 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Isvara Puri.
21 Feb 2023 - Disappearance Day of Srila Jagannatha Dasa Babaji
21 Feb 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Rasikananda
23 Feb 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Purusottama Dasa Thakura

MARCH 2023

- 03 Mar 2023 - **Amalaki Vrata Ekadashi**
04 Mar 2023 - Disappearance of Sri Madhavendra Puri
07 Mar 2023 - **Gaura Purnima**
08 Mar 2023 - Festival of Jagannatha Misra
15 Mar 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Srivasa Pandita
18 Mar 2023 - **Papamochani Ekadashi**
19 Mar 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Govinda Ghosh
26 Mar 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Ramanujacharya
30 Mar 2023 - **Rama Navami**

APRIL 2023

- 01 April 2023 - **Kamada Ekadashi**
06 April 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Vamsivadananda Thakura
06 April 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Syamananda Prabhu
12 April 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Abhirama Thakura
15 April 2023 - Disappearance Day of Srila Vrndavana Dasa Thakura
16 April 2023 - **Varuthini Ekadashi**
20 April 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Gadadhara Pandita
25 April 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Sankaracharya

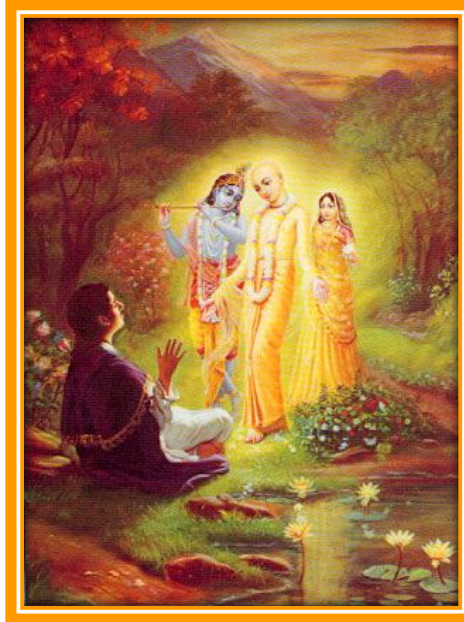
- 29 April 2023 - Appearance Day of Srimati Sita Devi
29 April 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Madhu Pandita
29 April 2023 - Appearance Day of Srimati Jahnava Devi

MAY 2023

- 01 May 2023 - **Mohini Ekadasi**
03 May 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Jayananda Prabhu
04 May 2023 - **Narasimha Caturdasi – Appearance of Lord Narasimhadeva**
05 May 2023 - Krishna Phula Dola, Salila Vihara
05 May 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Sri Radha-Ramana Devji
05 May 2023 - Buddha Purnima – Appearance Day of Lord Buddha
05 May 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Madhavendra Puri
05 May 2023 - Appearance Day of Sri Srinivasa Acharya
05 May 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Paramesvari Dasa Thakura
10 May 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Ramananda Raya
15 May 2023 - **Apara Ekadasi**
16 May 2023 - Appearance Day of Srila Vrndavana Dasa Thakura
30 May 2023 - Ganga Puja
30 May 2023 - Disappearance Day of Sri Baladeva Vidyabhusana
30 May 2023 - Appearance Day of Srimati Gangamata Goswami
31 May 2023 - **Pandava Nirjala Ekadasi**

JUNE 2023

- 04 June - Disappearance Day of Sri Mukunda Datta
04 June - Disappearance Day of Sri Sridhara Pandita
05 June - Disappearance Day of Sri Syamananda Prabhu
08 June - Appearance Day of Sri Vakresvara Pandita
13 June - Disappearance Day of Sri Srivasa Pandita
14 June - **Yogini Ekadasi**
18 June - Disappearance Day of Sri Gadadhara Pandita
18 June - Disappearance Day of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura
19 June - Gundica Marjana
20 June - Ratha Yatra Starts
20 June - Disappearance Day of Sri Svarupa Damodara Goswami
20 June - Disappearance Day of Sri Sivananda Sena
24 June - Disappearance Day of Sri Vakresvara Pandita
29 June - **Sayana Ekadashi**



ABOVE: Lord Caitanya reveals Himself as the combination of Radha-Krishna.