

Founder Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur

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President & Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja

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Without the key to a treasure-chest, the valuables inside are not accessible to us. Similarly, without the mercy of a bona-fide Guru, we do not have access to the abode of Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna. We all are hankering to become eternally blissful, which is only possible in the abode of Sri Krishna. In Kali-Yuga, chanting Hare Krishna Mahamantra under the shelter of a bona-fide Guru is the only means to reach the abode of Sri Krishna.

Yours in the Service of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Mission,

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja



QUALITY OF A PURE DEVOTEE

By HDG Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja

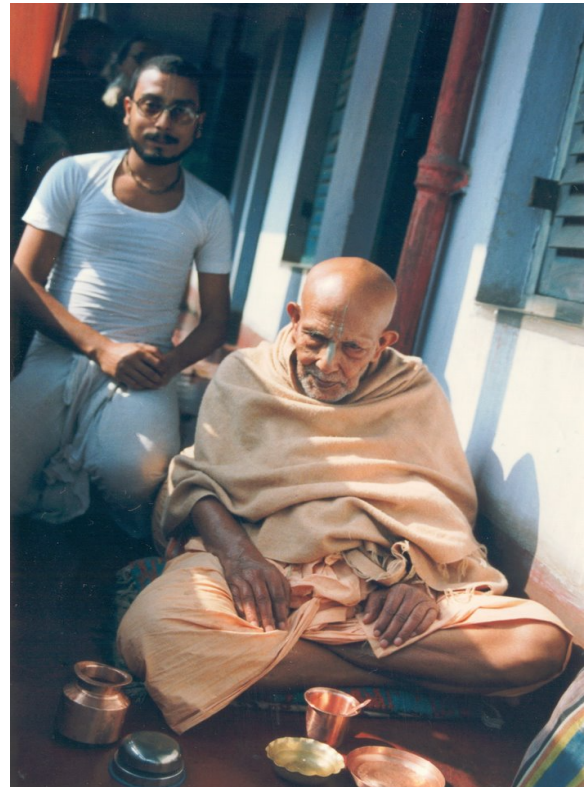
One quality of the pure devotee, exemplified in His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakur, is that he is without any animosity. This is a special quality of all saintly persons. A saintly person is called a *sadhu*. Actually, *sadhu* is one who is searching for eternity. In this age of hypocrisy, a person can easily achieve eternity easily by chanting the Hare Krishna Mahamantra under the shelter of an authorised lineage (*parampara*). One of our previous *acharyas* (teachers), Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur said that a real Vaisnava's nature is that he is free from animosity and he respects all living beings, because they are tiny sparks of Krishna's existence.

In this regard, I recall an incident that took place with Srila Gurudeva in Ambika, which is a historical place in Kalna (Bengal), 30 km away from Mayapur, Nadia. There are many temples dedicated to Gods and Goddesses in this area and it is inhabited by many orthodox *brahmins*. It so happened that the king of Kalna gifted a temple called Ananta Vasudeva Srimandir to my spiritual master. Now, according to our Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur Prabhupada's philosophy, a person eligible to be called *brahmin* is one who displays brahminical qualities through his behavior and not one who is merely born into the *brahmin* caste. My spiritual master is a firm follower of Srila Prabhupada. Therefore, his initiated disciples also received the sacred brahminical thread, even if they were not born in *brahmin* families.

When the caste *brahmins* in that area learned that Srila Gurudeva, the Acharya of Ananta Vasudeva temple, was practicing such activities, they became enraged. They came to confront him, bringing with them their most scholarly *brahmin*. Their intention was to challenge and refute Srila Prabhupada's philosophy. For over an hour they angrily presented their arguments,

quoting several Sanskrit texts from the *Vedas*, *Puranas* and from local books. All the while my spiritual master listened to their arguments silently. When their arguments ceased, my spiritual master asked in his soft voice, "Now, is it possible for me to speak with you? I would like to show you my Prabhupada's points that negate all your present complaints." Srila Gurudeva's bed was surrounded by different scriptures. He instructed us to bring various books. One by one, he opened specific pages and requested them to read out from those books. Thus, Srila Gurudeva provided different authorised books as supporting evidence for Srila Prabhupada's logic. Thereafter, they all became completely silent, offered prostrated obeisances to Srila Gurudeva, and peacefully returned to their homes. This behavior of Srila Gurudeva is a perfect example in our lineage of being 'without animosity'.

Swami BB Bodhayan



VIRAHA GITI

by Srila Niranjan Vinod Ray (Bhaktishastri, Bhaktikamal)

*jaya jaya prabhu-vara bhakati pramoda
yānr guṇāmṛte śuddha-bhaktera āmoda
(bhakti) vinodera abhimata śrī-caitanya-
śikṣāmṛta
nāmāśrayā śuddhā bhakti yānhāra sampada*

All Glories, all Glories, to the Great Master Bhakti Pramode whose nectarean qualities give ‘āmōda’ to the pure devotees. Srila Bhaktivinode’s desired intention, Sri Chaitanya’s nectarean instructions, shelter of the holy name and pure devotion, are his assets. (1)

*lokanātha tīrthibhūta yaśohara sthāne
kapotākṣa-tire gaṅgānanda-pura grāme
śrī-gaurāṅga icchā-mate āsile e pṛthivīte
bhaktyāloke ujalite ei dharā-dhāme*

Following Sri Gaurāṅga’s will, on the bank of Kapotakṣa, is the village of Gangananda-pura, in Jessore which Lokanātha Goswami purified by being born in, he willingly descended to this mortal plane, to fill this world with the light of Devotion. (2)

*madhu-gandha pāi yathā matta madhukara
anveṣiyā puṣpe tāhe mile atahpara
śuddha-bhakti gandha pāi, āśraya korile tāi
bhakati-ratan-pāda-padma sudhākara*

Wherever the smell of honey presides, the drunken bees go there searching for the nectar they gather from the flowers. Similarly, you sensed pure devotion and take shelter at the lotus feet of Bhakti Ratna Prabhu and thus tasted nectar. (3)

*kaiśora vayasa tava sundara mūrati
śānta dānta satya-niṣṭha bhakti-rase sthiti
śrī-gaurāṅga śrī-carāṇe koile ātma-samarpaṇe
heri bhakti-ratna prabhu pailen prīti*

Your splendid youth with a beautiful form adorned with qualities such as peacefulness, gentleness and truthfulness is filled with *bhakti-rasa*. Surrendered unto the lotus feet of the Lord Sri Gaurāṅga, Bhakti Ratna Prabhu had the delight of seeing such one-pointed dedication. (4)

*tomāre su-pātra jāni bhakati-ratan
śikhailā yata gūḍha bhakti-śāstra-marma
ādeśilā sevivāre gaura-śikṣā anusāre
prāṇa-priyatama rādha-madanamohana*

Knowing you to be a qualified recipient, Bhakti Ratna prabhu shared through teaching, the most confidential essence of *bhakti-śāstra*. Following Gaura’s instruction, he ordered you to render service to the most beloved deity of life, Sri Madana-mohan. (5)

*śuddha-bhakta-gaṇera cittera vibhāvana
anurūpa vapu kṛṣṇa kare prakāṭana
aprākṛta śrī-vigrahe rāga-sevā kṛṣṇa cāhe
snehe daṇḍa koila tomā jāni nija-jana*

Characteristically, Krishna manifests as the transcendental deity according to the desire in the core of the hearts of pure devotees and begs for their loving service. Knowing you as His own, Krishna gave you such affectionate ‘punishment’. (6)

*(bhakti) ratan ājnāy vinodera nija-jana
Bhakati siddhānta sarasvatī-śrī-carāṇa
ekānte śaraṇa loiyā śikhāile ācariyā
aikāntikī nāmāśrayā śuddha-bhakti-dhana*

By the order of Bhakti Ratna, you received the shelter of Bhaktivinode’s own son, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Thakur. Seeing your one-pointed surrender, he taught you by his example, exclusive shelter of the holy name and gave the treasure of pure devotion. (7)



*śrī-guru o gaurāṅgera prasādera bale
bṛhaspati jini atula pāṇḍitya labhile
vyākhyā kori śuddha bhakti nāmera apūrva śakti
kata śata jane kṛpā kori uddhārile*

By the mercy of Sri Guru and Gauranga, you acquired vast knowledge like that of Bṛhaspati. Through your preaching pure devotion and the unprecedented power of the holy name, thousands of people were delivered by your mercy. (8)

*vipralambha rase nitya avasthita hoye
gara-gara dehe nirantara nāma loye
rāge sadā sevā kori gāndharvikā giridhārī
tānhāra dayita-dāsa-caraṇa āśraye*

Taking shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati and serving his beloved Gandharvika Giridhari with loving attachment, you chanted the holy name incessantly, being absorbed in separation from Them. (9)

*kṛṣṇa-mūrti nitya jāni tānhāra sevana
madhva hoite sāra gaura korilā grahaṇa
śrī gosvāmī śāstra-patha vinodera abhimata
ācari śikhāle sei bhaktyṅga yājana*

Knowing Him to be eternal transcendental reality, as taught by Madhvacarya, and accepted by Gaura, you lovingly served the deity of Krishna. Following the scriptures of Goswamis and the instructions of Bhaktivinode, you taught us the limbs of bhakti both by precept and example. (10)

*tṛṇāpekṣā sunīca sahiṣṇu taru hoite
amānī mānada hoiyā kṛṣṇa-nāma loite
śrī-gaurāṅga śikṣā ei mūrti-manta tomātei
śrī-nāma-bhajana-rīti śikhāle jagate*

Thinking yourself lower than a blade of grass, remaining tolerant like a tree and pride-less yet always respecting of others, you chanted the holy name in seclusion. Thus you became an embodiment of the teachings of Sri Gauranga

and taught the whole world the method of Sri nam bhajana. (11)

*mātr-bhakta śiromaṇi gaura prabhu hana
bhakati pramoda tumi tānra nija-jana
mātāra sevita hari gopīnātha sadā smari
gopīnātha nāme maṭha korile sthāpana*

Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu was the crest jewel of *mātr-bhaktas* and you, O Bhakti Pramode, being His own man, followed his example. Remembering your mother's daily worship of Lord Gopinath, you installed the deity in your Math, naming Him Gopinath. (12)

*siddha mahājana-gaṇer patha anusari
varṣādhika kāl tumi vyādhi chala kori
vipralambha rasa-piṭhe chile sukha-samādhite
āpana daśāy aṣṭakāla līlā smari*

On the pretext of sickness, for one year, you stayed blissfully in deep meditation, remembering Ashtakaliya lila, in the mood of separation, perfectly following the path chalked out by the mahajans. (13)

*dāmodara aṣṭāviṃśa gaura-caturdaśī
gauḍa vraja-vane nitya-līlā mājhe paśi
sampatti-daśāy roye, vraja-nava-yuva-dvaye
śrī-gaurāṅga-dhane tumi seva aharniśi*

In the month of Damodara, on the twenty-eighth day of Gaura Caturdasi, you entered the nitya-lila in the forest of Navadvip's Vraja. Staying in Gauranga-dham, having fully obtained your spiritual body, you serve the youthful divine couple of Vraja day and night. (14)

*sarva-bhūte bhagavat-bhāva sandarśana
kṛṣṇa-maya jagat saṁsāra sarva-sama
bhaktottama mahāśaya, tānre bhāgavate kay
e sava vicāre tumi bhāgavatottama*

Seeing your worshipable Lord in all living entities and this material world as His energy, and thus being equipoised in relation to these



two, you showed yourself as the top-most devotee described in Srimad Bhāgavatam as *bhāgavatottama*. (15)

*vraje rāsa-līlā navadvīpe saṅkīrtana
gaurāṅga-nāgarī-bhāva ithe nirasana
sukhe pūrṇa hoite tumi nāma-yajña pare śuni
mahāntera nāma-yajña mātmya varṇana*

Completely rejecting Gaurāṅga nāgarī-bhāva, you relished rasalīla in Vraja-dham, through performing nam-saṅkīrtan in Navadvīp. You feel great bliss hearing nam-saṅkīrtan and preach the glories of *nāma-yajña* as given by the mahajans. (16)

*sei cinmaya sukhac-chavi āra nā heribo
sei aparūpa vyākhyā āra nā śunibo
hārāiyā śrī-caraṇ śūnya-maya tri-bhuvan
sei śrī-caraṇa sevā āra nā pāibo*

Never again will I behold such personification of sublime consciousness. Never again will I hear such beautiful narration. Having lost those lotus feet, the whole world seems empty. Never again will I have the chance to serve those lotus feet. (17)

*e hena amūlya tava caraṇa pāiyā
nija karma-doṣete phelinu hārāiyā
ei kṛpā karo prabhu, yena nā pāsari kabhu
tava śrī-caraṇa sadā smare yeno hiyā*

Receiving such precious lotus feet, I have now lost them as a result of my karma. Please cast your merciful glance upon me so that I may never be away from you; let my heart remember your lotus feet constantly. (18)

*māya-dāsa durācāra āmi to sadāi
tava kṛpā paibāre yogyatā o nāi
adoṣa-daraśi tumi saba aparādha kṣami
ahaitukī kṛpā prabhu korile ye tāi*

I am a miscreant and a gross servant of maya; I have no qualification to receive your mercy. You however, never see the faults of others and

always forgive their offenses. Will you not shower your causeless mercy upon me? (19)

*gaurāṅga-pārṣada tumi bhuvana pāvana
gaura-bhṛtya bhakti-vinodera nija-jana
ei kṛpā karo prabhu vañcita nā hoi kabhu
nitāicānder nāma haṭṭete kakhana*

An associate of Sri Gaurāṅga, you are the saviour of this world. O servant of Sri Gaurāṅga in the lineage of Bhaktivinoda, please cast your mercy upon me and never cheat me so that I may always stay in the *nāma-haṭṭa* of Nitai Canda. (20)

*ei se prārthanā tava caraṇa-kamale
iṣṭa-sevā diyā rakho pāda-padma-tale
śūnya aparādha-caye aikāntikī nāmāśraye
dāsa anudāsa karo bhakati-kamale*

This is my prayer at your lotus feet that you give the service to my worshipable Lord by keeping me at your lotus feet. This lowly servant begs that he may be freed from offense and obtain one-pointed shelter in the holy name. And make his heart a lotus of devotion. (21)



WITH GRATITUDE

by His Holiness Srila Radhanath Swami

I am both grateful and honored to have been given the opportunity to present an offering on the occasion of the advent ceremony of His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja. My special gratitude to His Holiness Sripad B.B. Bodhayan Maharaja, who carries the true spirit of his Guru Maharaja's compassionate mission.

Srila Puri Goswami Maharaja, one of the closest personal associates of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur Prabhupada, offered his whole life to living and teaching the pinnacle of spiritual life: unconditional, unmotivated loving service to Sri Radha Gopinath as taught by Sriman Mahaprabhu.

I remember one evening many years ago. I was with about twenty-five devotees from Mumbai on a pilgrimage to Sri Mayapur Navadvipa Dhama. It was about nine o'clock at night and we were walking from the ghat where we had just returned by boat from the town. As we walked past a Gaudiya Math, we were told that Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami, a dear Godbrother of my beloved Guru Maharaja, was in residence. We asked if we could his darshan for a moment darshan. We were told that he was very ill, however we could briefly offer our pranams to him.

When we came to his door, from his bed, he graciously invited us to come in. We crowded around him and he began to speak. For the next one hour he spoke with profound joy and enthusiasm about the qualities of a true vaisnava, citing scriptures, histories and life experiences. Our hearts were filled with gratitude as we appreciated the mercy of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. His assistants were trying to persuade him to stop speaking and rest, but his enthusiasm to speak to us kept

growing. Finally, they humbly pleaded with us to go so that he could rest. As we walked back, we were all in tears, having met one who truly loved Krishna and all of us.

On another occasion during Kartik in Vrindavan, I went alone to meet him. I was told that he was very ill and could not speak, but that I could come in his room to offer pranams. I bowed down and said that I was feeling fortunate to receive his blessings on the holy day of the disappearance of Srila Narottama das Thakur. His eyes opened wide, he exclaimed, "Oh Narottama Thakur!" He proceeded to speak for well over an hour about the pastimes of Narottama Das Thakur, from the Thakur's birth to his disappearance. He spoke with love and enthusiasm describing Narottama Das Thakur's childhood and his escape from a luxurious home to a simple life of devotion in Vrindavan. Then he shared stories in beautiful emotional detail about Narottama's humble service to Lokanath Goswami and Jiva Goswami, and about his loving relations with Srinivas Acarya and Ramchandra Kaviraja. Srila Puri Goswami Maharaja was physically so weak that he could only whisper. I was the only one in the room, kneeling at his bedside, my ear close to his mouth and heart filled with his compassion.

Those days, every year, he would come to Sri Krishna Balarama Temple on the disappearance day of my beloved Guru Maharaja, Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. The courtyard was filled with hundreds of devotees from all over the world. Srila Puri Goswami Maharaja would sometimes have to be carried in, but he spoke with great devotional power. He lovingly glorified ISKCON founder Acharya Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, thus strengthening our faith. Seeing his love for his godbrother and compassion for us, we got a glimpse of the true universality of vaisnavas.

With gratitude, your servant,
Radhanath Swami



SRI BHAKTI PRAMODA PURI VIJAY

by His Holiness Srila Bhakti Gaurav
Narasingha Maharaj

Pranams!

*vairagya-vidya-nija-bhakti-yoga-
siksartham ekam purusam puranam
sri-krsna-caitanya-sarira-dhari
krpambudhir yas tam aham prapadye*

“Let me take shelter of that Supreme Person, Sri Krishna, who has descended in the form of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to teach us real knowledge, His devotional service and detachment from whatever does not foster Krsna-bhakti. He has descended because He is an ocean of transcendental mercy. Let me surrender unto His lotus feet.” (Caitanya-caritamṛta, Madhya-lila 2:54 quoted from Kavi Karnapura’s Caitanya-candradaya-natakam)

*vairagya vidya nija bhaktiyogam
apayayan mam anabhipsu andham
sri puri bhakti pramoda nama
krpambudhir yastam aham prapadye*

“Pujyapad Sri Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja is an ocean of mercy and I offer my respects unto him. I was unwilling to drink the nectar of devotional service possessed of renunciation, but out of his causeless mercy, he made me drink it, even though I was otherwise unable to do so.”

In this mundane world, conditioned souls cling to their ignorance and laziness thinking it to be the highest bliss, but such laziness and ignorance will not save them at the time of death. Only when they are blessed by the grace of a *sadhu* of the highest order, a pure devotee of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, are they able to accept the chanting of the Holy name of Krishna with all sincerity and determination. Then only are such souls able to transcend birth and death, and attain the blissful abode of

Goloka Vrindavan and Sri Nabadweep eternally. Pujapad Sri Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja was such a *sadhu*, a *nam-acharya* in the truest sense of the word. He selflessly chanted the Holy name of Krishna in the ecstasy of *krishna-prem* both day and night, and he encouraged all those who took shelter at his lotus feet by his personal example to pursue the path of *shuddha-bhakti*, abandoning all false pretence and cheating propensities.

Woes of Kali-yuga

*andham tamah pravisanti, ye 'vidyam upasate
tato bhuya iva te tamo, ya u vidyayam ratah*

“Those who are engaged in the culture of nescience shall enter into the darkest region of ignorance. Worse still are those engaged in the culture of so-called knowledge.” (Ishopanishad 9)

In times of great need, the Lord Himself descends or sends His bona-fide agent.

*yada yada hi dharmasya glanir bhavati bharata
abhyutthanam adharmasya tadatmanam
srjamyaham*

“O descendent of Bharata, whenever there is a decline in *dharma* and a rise of *adharma*, I personally appear.” (Bhagavad-gita 4:7)

*brahmamda bhramite kona bhagyavan jiva
guru-krsna-prasade paya bhakti-lata-bija*

“According to their karma, all living entities are wandering throughout the universe. Some of them are being elevated to the upper planetary systems, and some are going down into the lower planetary systems. Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona-fide guru by the grace of Krishna. By the mercy of both Krishna and the guru, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of



devotional service.” (*Chaitanya-charitamrita, Madhya-lila* 19:151)

We live in Kali-yuga, and among the many faults of Kali-yuga (*kaler dosha nidhe rajan*) the “cheating-guru” must be added to the list. At present cheating-gurus, the likes of the witch Putana, poison their followers with numerous misconceptions and fanciful ideas thus polluting the devotional atmosphere. At such a time the appearance of a true *sadhu* to guide and teach *shuddha-bhakti* by his personal example is very, very rare – *sa mahatma su-durlabhah*.

Pujapad Sri Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja was such a *sadhu*, a real guru, (*sad-guru*) in the truest sense of the word. He stood firm in the conceptions of Prabhupada Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakura and Sri Bhaktivinoda, and he broadcast the necessity of humility as the quintessence of chanting the Holy Name of Krishna. Sri Puri Goswami descended to this world on the order of the Supreme Person to humbly accept the shelter of the lotus feet of Sri Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada as his life and soul and to broadcast the glories of *Sri Krishna-sankirtan*.

Sri Krishna-Sankirtan

ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-maha--davagni-nirvapanam
shreyah-kairava-chandrika-vitaranam vidya-vadhu-jivanam
anandambudhi-varadhanam prati-padam
purnamritaswadanam
sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate sri-krishna-sankirtanam

“The Holy name of Krishna cleanses the mirror of the heart and extinguishes the fire of misery in the forest of birth and death. As the evening lotus blooms in the moon’s cooling rays, the heart begins to blossom in the nectar of the name. At last the soul awakens to its real inner treasure: a life of love with Krishna. Again and

again tasting nectar, the soul dives and surfaces in the ever-increasing ocean of ecstatic joy. All conceivable phases of the self are fully satisfied and purified, and at last conquered by the all-auspicious influence of the Holy name of Krishna.”

While the primary purpose for the appearance of Krishna as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was to taste the ecstatic pleasure of serving Himself (Krishna) in the mood of Srimati Radharani, His secondary purpose was the spreading of the *sankirtan* movement for the benefit of humanity at large. Sri Chaitanya has given the prediction that the chanting of Krishna’s Name will be heard in every town and village of the world.

prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma
sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma

"In every town and village, the chanting of My name will be heard." (*Chaitanya-bhagavat, Antya-khanda* 4:126)

The Lord’s pure devotees are always eager to fulfil the Lord’s desires and thus they engage in the *sankirtan* movement with heart and soul to assist the Lord in delivering the fallen souls of this age through the *sankirtan* of the Holy name of Krishna. Such service often requires personal sacrifice and is sometimes even dangerous. But the pure devotees have no fear because they know that their worshipable Lord is always there to protect them. **Pujapad Sri Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja** was such a *sadhu*, a pure devotee, a *shuddha-bhakta*, in the truest sense of the word. His devotional practices were strictly regulated, but were permeated with the sweetness that characterized the devotion of Sri Uddhava.

Puri Goswami Vijay

ya idam paramam guhyam, mad-bhaktesu-abhidhasyati
bhaktim mayi param krtva, mam evaisyaty-asamsayah



“One who teaches this supreme secret of *bhakti-yoga* to others, advances to the highest platform of devotion and attains full consciousness of Me. Of this there is no doubt.” (*Bhagavad-gita* 18: 68)

*na ca tasman manusyesu, kascin me priya-
krttamah
bhavita na ca me tasmad, anyah priyataro bhuvi*

“There is no one dearer to Me in this world than such a devotee. Nor will there ever be anyone dearer to Me than one who teaches this supreme secret.” (*Bhagavad-gita* 18:69)

Those who dedicate themselves selflessly to the service of the Lord and His *sankirtan* movement are without a doubt very dear to the Lord and are always victorious. **Pujyapad Sri Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja** was such a **sadhu**, a fearless preacher of *Bhagavata dharma*. I offer my most humble prostrate obeisances million and millions of times in the dust of the lotus feet of Pujyapad Sri Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja, our guide and eternal shelter.

*nama-srestham manum api saci-putram atra
svarupam
rupam tasyagrajam uru-purim mathurim
gostavatim
radha-kundam giri-varam aho radhika-
madhavasam
prapto yasya prathita-krpaya sri gurum tam nato
'smi*

I am fully indebted to Sri Guru, **Pujyapad Sri Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja**, because he has given me so many valuable things. He has given me the highest conception of the Holy name of Krishna, the highest form of sound which contains the highest form of thought, aspiration, ideal, everything desirable. Next he has given me the mantra. He has given me the service of that great savior, the son of Mother Sachi, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who is like a golden mountain standing to show the

direction of *krishna-lila*. Sri guru has brought me to the lotus feet of Mahaprabhu's most favorite personal assistant, Sri Swarupa Damodara Goswami, who is the representation of Lalita Devi, the most favourite friend of Sri Radhika. Sri guru has brought me in connection with Sri Rupa Goswamipad, who was ordered to distribute the highest kinds of devotional love, *rasa*. By his grace, I have achieved the association of Srila Sanatana Goswamipad, who adjusts our position in relation to *raganuga-bhakti*, spontaneous divine love. He explains the path of *vaidhi-bhakti*, and gives us *sambandha-jnana*. Sri guru has given me Mathura Mandala, where Radha and Govinda have Their pastimes; where the forest, the hills every creeper, shrub and grain of sand, everyone is bearing the acquaintance of Radha-Krishna *lila*, and wherever I shall cast my glance they will help me in my remembrance of Radha and Govinda. I have received all these things from Sri Guru: Vrindavana, where the cows and milkmen have their village constructed. I am becoming acquainted with their association, their nature and their feelings of love for Krishna. By the grace of Sri Guru, I have become acquainted with Radha-kunda, the favorite place of Radha and Govinda for Their pastimes, and this great Govardhan. Lastly, Sri Guru has given me the hope that one day I can get the service of Sri Sri Radhika and Madhava. I have been given all these assurances by Sri Guru, so I bow my head with all my respects to his lotus feet.” (Raghunath Dasa Goswami's Vilap-kusumanjali, verse 6, translation by Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhara Deva Goswami)

Pujyapad Sri Bhakti Pramoda Puri Goswami Maharaja vijay!



A MESSAGE TO ALL VAISNAVAS

by His Holiness Srila Bhakti Alok Paramadvaiti Maharaja

Dandavat pranams!

I was witness to Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Maharaja's amazing effort to unite the vaisnavas under the banner of mutual friendship and voluntary cooperation. When Mandala Publishing published the biography of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, it was a very beautiful book. It was also very costly and yet I was requested to give a free copy to all sannyasis in Mayapur. Maharaja's desire to make the vaisnavas happy and to glorify his Gurudev was great beyond imagination. He was so keen to please all the devotees that he gave darshan from his bedside to everyone. I witnessed so many great acharyas coming to his bedside and he encouraged them all, whether they were godbrothers or younger devotees. But he was worried about the royal road which Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupad had made from the east to the west, and that many people without true bhakti would go and travel on this road to contaminate people with their imitation for mundane benefits. He told us that we should help and protect the purity of the bhakti teachings in the Western world.

Later we had to witness how our godbrothers, the disciples of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupad, became divided into so many sectarian camps. It is so strange that even though they all follow the same parampara, they are all convinced that only their group will reach the goal of bhakti. My God, dear Krishna, what happened?! It is just like different Christian groups who all believe in Jesus as their saviour, they are convinced that others belonging to other vaisnava families are offenders.

Srila Puri Maharaja's room was a true place of shelter. Institutionalism had no charm to him. And one day he told me "I am already 95 years old, baba, and have my own mission to take care of, but one thing I want to tell you: Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur wanted the whole world to get Krishna, Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja gave his whole life to preach Krishna Consciousness around the world. My Gurubhai Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Maharaja was heavily criticized for trying to help the Western devotees, but I have personally not done anything for them yet. That is the reason why I will accept to be the president of the World vaisnava Association - Vishva Vaisnava Raj Sabha". My heart was dancing in ecstasy. He was the vaisnava I was looking for: a person who could appreciate all other preachers and was ready to help, to counteract the sectarianism in the vaisnava world. This is my testimony and I will give it again and again because such souls are so rare. And it is my pleasure to say that I see such generosity also in Srila Bodhayan Maharaja as exemplified by the the Gopinath Gaudiya Math's door being open to everyone.

Congratulations to him on his 118th birthday. Let all the Gaudiya missions blossom and contribute to the glories of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasawati Thakur!

Vyasapuja ki jay!

Your insignificant aspirant of a servant,
Swami B.A. Paramadvaiti



VANDANA

*by His Holiness Srila Bhakti Bhavana Vishnu
Swami Maharaja*

*nama om visnu-padaya gaura-presthaya bhutale
srimate bhakti pramodaya puri gosvami iti
namine
divya-jnana-padat্রে ca prabhava janma janmani
jnana-vairagya-dehaya sastra siddhanta-samvide
patinam saduddare yati-vesa-dharaya vai
pracacara-karye ca jagarukaya sarvada
yathoddhasasya-kumarad bhagavad-arcane ratih
vaisnavanam sarva-krtye daksata parama tatha*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja, who is very dear to Lord Gauranga on this earth.

I offer my respectful obeisance unto the lotus feet of him who perpetually illuminates this dark world with the radiance of transcendental knowledge, who is the dearly beloved sovereign of my life, birth after birth, who is the veritable embodiment of sacred knowledge and renunciation and the personification of all scriptural testimony.

I offer obeisances unto him who has adorned himself in the august robes of a mendicant to kindly redeem the fallen souls; unto him who is forever vigilant in both the practice and the preaching of *Bhagavad-Dharma*.

I offer obeisances unto him whom has manifest from childhood the divine loving attachment to the holy service of Lord Sri Krsna, just as Sri Uddhava, and who thus possesses a wonderful proficiency in all devotional rites of the Vaisnavas.

It is our great fortune to have obtained the invaluable association of His Holiness Om Vishnupada Paramahansa Astottara-sata Sri Srimad Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaja on a number of occasions. Srila Puri

Maharaja's potent words carry a deep and penetrating message, a clarion call for unalloyed service to our beloved master, Shri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. We observe the transcendental qualities of an exalted vaisnava, described above in his *pranam mantra*, as manifested by Srila Puri Maharaja. He is the personification of devotion, devotional conclusions, transcendental realizations and renunciation. He exemplifies one-pointed adherence to the instructions to his glorious Guru Maharaja, nitya-lila pravista Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur Prabhupada. The *sastric* discourses of Srila Puri Maharaja encourage us to dive deeply into the nectarean ocean of *bhakti-rasa*.

At an advanced age of over 100 years, Srila Puri Maharaja held us spellbound for well over an hour as he strongly spoke during his Vyasa Puja observance with a clear yet wavering voice about *Bhagavad Dharma*. Though not translated from Bengali, the intensity and purity of his empowered message was evident in its bold delivery. The devotees present were awed by the amount of devotional energy emanating from Srila Puri Maharaja. We were very much happy to observe these and other sublime qualities of Srila Puri Maharaja, for the manifestation of such qualities reveal the true nature of a vaisnava.

Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura has detailed the most important activities of a spiritual master or guru in his *Gurvastakam* song. The disciple sees the guru on the platform of *suddha-sattva*, absorbed in the mellows and activities of the higher realm. He considers the guru as capable of rescuing the conditioned souls from this material world. Each and every word from the guru is aimed to elevate us.

Srila Puri Maharaja is known throughout the vaisnava world for his absorption and attachment to the worship of his Deities, notably his attraction to Lord Narasingha and



Sri Sri Gaura Gadadhara - inspiring us all by his perfect example.

dharmasya tattvam nihitam guhayam, maha-jano yena gatah sa panthah

(Mahabharata, Vana-parva 313:117)

It is said in the *Mahabharata* that the real truths are hidden in the hearts of the vaisnavas. Therefore, we should seek out an advanced vaisnava such as Srila Puri Maharaja and inquire from him. The heart of a true vaisnava is very soft and pliable so we can easily extract the divine wisdom held there. Although the qualities and divine attributes of a *suddha* vaisnava are glorified again and again throughout our scriptures, the successful transmission of transcendental knowledge to the recipient requires qualifications for the inquirer also. Namely he must be sincere and approach this vaisnava humbly with *pariprasna* (submissive inquiry) and *seva* (service), as indicated by Lord Krsna in *Bhagavad-gita* 4:34. Such higher association is emphasized as absolutely essential throughout the scriptures and forms the basis for the essential step of taking shelter of a qualified vaisnava as one's guru.

Indeed, even a moment's association of a highly exalted devotee of the Lord can have such a profound influence on a sincere seeker, that all perfection may be achieved simply as a direct result of that short contact.

'sadhu-sanga', 'sadhu-sanga' — sarva-sastre kaya lava-matra sadhu-sange sarva-siddhi haya
"The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success." (Cc. Madhya 22:54)

The essence of this transcendental transfer is truly divine, beyond the mundane realm. The process depends upon the exalted vaisnava's high spiritual qualifications and also the sincerity of the seeker, who is receiving this

message. These transcendental qualities of the devotee are his ornaments (*sadhu-bhusana*), his glory, his decoration and a measure of his worth.

titiksavah karunikah suhrdah sarva-dehinam ajata-satravah santah sadhavah sadhu-bhusanah

The symptoms of a *sadhu* are that he is tolerant, merciful and friendly to all living entities. He has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime. (Srimad Bhagavatam 3:25:21)

The signs of purity clearly manifested by the exalted devotees indicate their strict adherence to devotional principles and the devotional process. Their exalted standing provides an encouraging example enthralling us towards our goal. Their shining success illuminates a path for us. We are to simply follow in their footsteps, for one develops the qualities of those he associates with. Conversely, the majority of this world is absorbed in the path opposing spiritual endeavors, that of *asat*, or absorption in the non-spiritual. This non-devotional energy or activity is that which pulls us away from our spiritual goals. We must avoid the non-spiritual - *asat sanga tyaja*. The *Gurvastakam* also informs us that if we fail to get the mercy of the spiritual master there is no way that we will obtain success in our devotional endeavors - *Yasyaprasadan na'kuto pi*. Indeed, we are asked, who is it that has been delivered avoiding the association and service of the vaisnavas? *Chadiya vaisnava-seva, nistara peyechhe keba*. That would be, no one! Further, those engaged in sinful activities are unworthy of being considered vaisnavas.

Our great fortune is to have obtained more than a moment's association with the great vaisnava, Srila Puri Maharaja, thereby gaining the immeasurable benefit of his connection, instructions and example. Simple words fail to convey the exalted qualities of Srila Puri Maharaja.

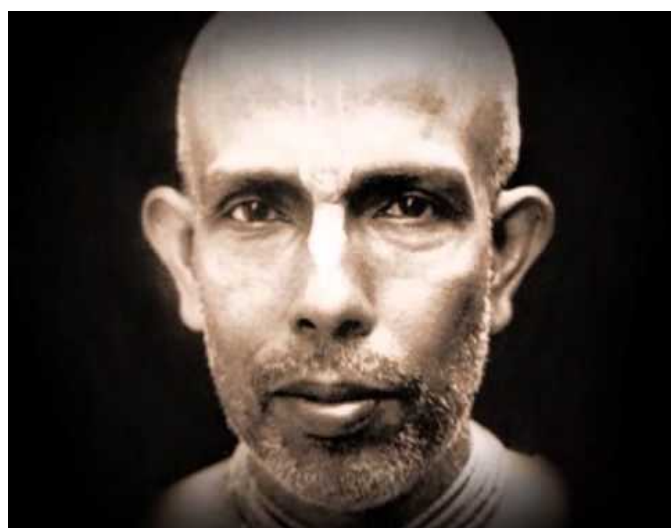


We have noted that once Srila Puri Maharaja manifested his deep devotional sentiments and a strong humility during an exchange with another *sannyasi* in our presence. Srila Puri Maharaja was asked, "Since when have you chanted purely?" His humble reply was that he had been trying for his lifetime to chant purely, but without success. As Srila Puri Maharaja enthusiastically glorified the Holy Name and simultaneously attempted to reveal his own lack of taste for the same, he appeared to be exhibiting the symptoms of ecstatic devotional sentiment, thus revealing his deep feelings of ecstatic love.

In another transcendental exchange Srila Puri Maharaja exhibited a profound natural humility when he kindly requested my personal blessings just subsequent to my having entered and offered him my respects. I was dumbfounded by such a humble request by such an exalted personality, whom I doubted would benefit from my good wishes.

I offer my humble pranams to Srila Puri Maharaja on this auspicious day of his holy appearance.

Tridandi-swami Bhakti Bhavana Vishnu



LOVING RESPECT TO AN EXALTED VAISNAVA

by His Holiness Srila Bhakti Nandan Swami

One day my Guru Maharaja (His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaja) called me to personally tell me something. Guru Maharaja was already at an advanced age. He looked at me and said, "If I do not live long enough to give you (*sannyasa*), if I don't live that long, you go to Srila Bhakti Promote Puri Goswami Maharaja, my beloved godbrother. If you accept *sannyasa* from his hand, that will be as good as accepting from my hand; it's non-different." Guru Maharaja clearly instructed me, revealing his (aforementioned) desire, if he could not give me *sannyasa* and if he did not live until that time.

Srila Guru Maharaja would often tell me and encourage me to have profound respect and love for Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja. He would often say, "You know, he, our Pranavananda Prabhu, is dear-most...he has always been so dear to my Gurudev, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupad." Pranavananda was the brahmachari name of Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja during the lifetime of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. (I repeat Srila Guru Maharaja's words) "Our respected Pranavananda Prabhu, very dear to our Gurudev, Srila Prabhupad! You should always have profound respect, loving respect for him." Guru Maharaja (also) used to say, "He is the editor of our Prabhupad's magazine, *Nadiya Prakash*. He is a brahmachari, brahmana, akumara brahmachari and a pure vaisnava. So you must always have deep regard and love for this exalted vaisnava."

So, this way, at some point, Srila Guru Maharaja left this planet. When Guru Maharaja left this planet, I remembered his instruction. A little later, following his desire, I humbly approached Srila Bhakti Promode Puri



Goswami Maharaja to accept sannyasa from him. He was very very happy, he was so happy and very mercifully he immediately agreed to confer the holy order of sannayasa on me. Thus I feel the divine connection of both these exalted personalities in my sannyasa.

Now there is something else to tell. Guru Maharaja had (also) invited Srila Puri Goswami Maharaja to preside over the sannyasa ceremony of Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev Goswami Maharaja at Sri Caitanya Saraswat Math. Guru Maharaja wanted that he presided over the entire sannyasa ceremony, as the acarya, acknowledging the exalted position of Srila Puri Maharaja.

Gratefully,
Bhakti Nandan Swami

VYASA PUJA ADDRESS

by Sripad Saran Damodar Das

It is my greatest fortune to be able to write a few words about the charisma and divine personality of His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami.

The unalloyed devotee of the Supreme Lord comes to this world to help and deliver the fallen conditioned souls from the labyrinth of the material whirlpool, sometimes life after life, accepting great tribulations on executing such a task. In this respect he is regarded as most compassionate and is beloved of all the jivas. I would like to share my knowledge on the divine personality of Srila Gurudeva though I am most unqualified. The verse commencing *mukam karoti vacaalam* means that by the grace of Sri Gurudeva even the dumb can speak and the lame can climb mountains. This is very appropriate for a devotee of my calibre to venture to write about the glories of such a great personality. In other words, only by his

grace, can one understand his divine pastimes on this earth.

I remember Srila Gurudeva's simple, honest and direct personality. In spiritual matters he was very deep, but in conversing with others he was most humble and honest. He would never insult anyone with his words though he would chastise his errant disciples for their good. In this age of hypocrisy, speaking with a double edged tongue is quite common. Often people praise others while internally wish for their down fall. However, Srila Gurudeva made everybody at ease with him, even the scoffers who came to see him would go back with a deep reverence for His sweet personality. Why? The reason is, he had always the welfare of everyone in his heart irrespective of where that person came from or which country he belonged to. The pure devotee is actually a citizen of the world. He would never be the least inclined to criticize anyone irrespective of who he was. On the contrary, he was always eager to bless all those weary pilgrims who sought his grace in their divine quest.

I remember one incident when one stalwart disciple of Srila Kirtananda Swami came to see him. On seeing Srila Gurudeva, this disciple loudly shouted 'Srila Kirtananda Swami ki jaya'. Immediately Gurudeva loudly exclaimed 'jaya' in unison. This disciple, hoping to meet some opposition from Gurudeva, became staggered and was at once humbled. He became awed by Srila Gurudeva's humility. Gurudeva did not differentiate the other vaisnava organisations saying that all of the Saraswath organisation from Srila Prabhupada Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur are part of the same family. At the same time, he did not acknowledge those who are opposed to the cult of pure devotion as propagated by Sriman Mahaprabhu.

It is in the Mahabharath that the great King Yuddhistira never spoke any lies. In comparison I can vouch that Srila Gurudevas was so incredibly honest that what ever he spoke was



always true. In this regard I did once confess to him about my occasional dishonesty. In response he made the startling declaration to me that he too had been dishonest one time. He went on to relate the incident: Once in his home-town, a frightened cow came running and sought shelter in his yard. Understanding that the cow was frightened of being slaughtered, Srila Gurudeva took her to a secluded place. After some time, a muslim man with a huge knife rushed into his house and loudly questioned whether anybody had seen his cow. Srila Gurudeva then declared impassively that he had no knowledge of the cow. Hearing this, the muslim man left. Thus his honesty included protection of the pure devotees and the sacred cow or the sacred paraphanelia of the Supreme Lord. This is the true display of morality.

The qualification of a genuine spiritual master is that he is proficient in all scriptures. Srila Gurudeva was a storehouse of Vedic knowledge. When the situation presented, he could quote verbatim from any *Purana*. The real truth was, the simple style, laced with scriptural evidence, with which he presented the facts was able to drive the point home to even a doubting devotee. His memory was incredible even at such an advanced age, when people ordinarily cannot remember their own name. He would astonish his audience with so many references and verses from the holy scriptures. Srila Viswanath Chakrawarthy has declared the prime symptom of a bona fide spiritual master is that he could convince his disciples and others on spiritual truths by removing all their doubts. This is the famous commentary of the verse *tasmad guru papadyeta jijnasur guru uttamamam*.

Srimad Bhagavatam and Chaitanya Charitamrita were two books very dear to Gurudeva. In practice, Srila Gurudeva was very thorough in what he did, including worship of the Lord (*puja*). Nevertheless, he would not tolerate any carelessness in Deity worship. He demanded the

highest standards and would complain that there were so many offences committed by the pujari disciples doing this service, that he had to constantly pray to the Supreme Lord for their forgiveness. Moreover, he was conscious of all that went on in the deity room even though he was personally not there. I would marvel at such uncanny knowledge and the fact that Srila Gurudeva is non-different from Sri Hari would then gradually dawn for a moment in my mind. I can relate many incidents where though not being personally present, he was conscious of the state of the mind of the pujari who was executing the worship of the Lord. However, for keeping this prose short, I will stop here.

In siddhanta, Srila Gurudeva was one of the best exponent of the words of His beloved Gurudev Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasawati Goswami PRABHUPADA. He would not tolerate anything in opposition to what PRABHUPAD had said. The new fad of trying to acquire mellows of pure devotion cheaply or trying to attain the culmination of rasa tattwa even when one is unqualified to enter into such topics, is quite common nowadays. Srila Gurudeva would constantly stress the incessant chanting of the Holy Name for such people rather than discussion of higher topics. He would remind us that, though it is our goal, we have to attain that objective solely by giving up offences to the Holy Name and by serving the pure devotees of the Lord. Taste in chanting the Holy Name is the measure of eligibility of the devotee in order to relish such divine pastimes.

In regard to chanting of the Holy name which is the real motto of the Gaudiya Math, '*Param vijayate Sri Krishna Sankirtanan*', Srila Gurudeva would advise this as the basis of our preaching and most important in the instructions of Sriman Mahaprabhu. Notwithstanding, he would not tolerate people holding the bead bag as if chanting but at the same time appearing to either talking with other devotees or window shopping. He would frown at such behavior saying that time should



be allotted to only chanting the Holy Name and to be inattentive of the Name is also regarded as an offence. In worship too no slips or divergence from the norm in attending to the holy form of the Lord was tolerated by him. In fact his high birth too is a testimony to his strict principles and rigidity in following devotional principles but he has by his steadfastness also always inspired the devotees on the lower rungs to understand the seriousness of devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

He was an ocean of compassion for all who sought his blessings and as I have mentioned, he would never criticize anyone and even when slandered would bear it with a fortitude. He would express grief on hearing that a devotee had fallen off the devotional path but he would never partake in criticism. Rather, he would be angry at other devotees who criticised others. Such was the lofty behavior and example of Srila Gurudeva HDG Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaja. I pray that though I do not possess an iota of any qualities or proper behaviour, that he bless me so that one day I too may be able to acquire this divine wealth and progress in the path to the feet of the divine couple, Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha Gopinath.

Your servant,
Saran Damodar Das

AVIRBHAVA OFFERING

by Sripad Ramdas Das

*“He reasons ill who tells that vaisnavas die,
When thou art living still in sound!
The vaisnavas die to live, and living try
To spread the holy name around!”*
— Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur

Dear Gurudeva,

While meditating on your beautiful transcendental form, and remembering all the

auspiciousness and mercy that you have showered on this dog of a disciple, I am always amazed at your kindness, compassion, and love. During time spent with you, there were so many moments in which the impressions of your merciful acts burned into my soul like a brand of love that I will never be able to remove. I remember whenever I would first arrive from the West to see you, I would be eager to know how you were and if there was some service that I could do. Instead, you would always be more concerned with my well-being, asking: “Did you have Prasadam? Do you have a comfortable room? You have gone through so much trouble to travel here, please rest.” It is impossible to describe the extent of your sweetness and the characteristic of the deep pure love that you have shown us. The magnitude of that love embraced all beings around you as well: the birds, the cows—all were fortunate to receive your merciful glance. Through the perspective of our philosophy I know that even the animals in the holy Dhama are more elevated than a degraded, stray Western dog like me. Yet, through all my coverings, all my maya, and all the lifetimes of my conditioning, you could detect a spark of spirit within me and leave an impression that would last forever. You instilled in me a confidence that by taking shelter in the Holy Name, one day, even I could be delivered. You helped us understand that the power of the Holy Name and the association of vaisnavas is more powerful and influential than all the material energy combined, if we develop that faith. You taught us that the powerful rushing river of Sriman Mahaprabhu’s unlimited mercy can wash away lifetimes of dirt, if we would simply be willing to swim in its sweet cooling currents.

O Gurudeva, what a fool am I to have not taken advantage of every single second that you gave us to serve Sriman Mahaprabhu and the Divine Couple under your divine guidance. So many instructions that you have given me, I have yet to follow. So much service that you have



bestowed on me, I have yet to complete. Your patience and tolerance with me has gradually taught me how to practice that with others. I remember whatever problems were in my mind or whatever difficulty I was facing at the time, they seemed to disappear within moments of having your darshan. Enchanted by your holy vibration, the “realities” of worldly concerns would drift away like clouds being burned by the sun, while transcendental reality revealed and manifested itself to all who came into your divine presence. Your sweetness and humility was so real and powerful that even gurus and non-devotees alike were charmed and defeated by it—you had them spellbound as you treated all with a love and respect so deep that it defied reason.

The depth of the humility you exhibited when even a stranger came to meet you also always amazed me. You would fold your palms offering pranams as if to receive their blessings when in fact they had come to receive yours! Such genuine humility would constantly blow our minds and reset any definition of what we thought humility was—you surpassed all such definitions and re-wrote the book on saranagati. Then, I understood why it is said that humility is the “crown jewel” of the vaisnavas. It is the necessary requirement to enter the land of dedication and service.

O Gurudeva, I miss being able to sleep on your floor at your bedside, massage your lotus feet, help you put on your wooden shoes, or stand guard at your door. I spent my life wasted until that fateful day when I first had your divine darshan and heard your Hari-katha. My heart pounded upon seeing you and my head spun with excitement—my life would never be the same again. I could not imagine my great fortune in those years and how precious every moment really was. I often would pinch myself when I was in your room while you were delivering Hari-katha because I could not believe my good fortune to be in your presence—this bewildered me. “How could

such a fallen soul like me be in the presence of a being so elevated? What was I doing there? Why am I being allowed to stay in the same room?” Then I would look down at my camera and think to myself: “Oh, you must be here to record this for others who *are* qualified to see and hear this. Don’t be in illusion, you are just a servant!”

As I grow older and time passes, I gradually understand the magnitude of your gift to the world and how it continues to encourage and affect the lives of those who are fortunate enough to read your books, see your videos, and hear your Hari-katha.

Dear Gurudeva, please allow me to continue to take shelter of the lotus feet of the vaisnavas and serve you through publishing your books and videos—allow me to share with the world what a real vaisnava is like and the qualities that a true paramahansa displays. You are the manifestation of complete surrender, humility, wisdom, dedication, love, non-sectarianism, and all the qualities we read about in the scriptures. In a world where there is so much confusion about guru-tattva, and how to really take shelter under the shade of the lotus feet of guru, I pray that your example may become known to all sincere souls who are seeking a genuine spiritual guardian, a universal teacher, and a repository where all their faith can be deposited without doubt or fear. The reciprocation of your love is so magnanimous that it drowns out any doubt, leaving them helplessly in love, having become slaves to that divine current that flows through you.

O Gurudeva, please save me from self-deception, from complacency, from weakness of heart, from false pride, from misconception, from aparadha, and accept me as your menial servant. Please allow me to grab your lotus feet at the moment of transition and pull me wherever I can serve you again. I pray, I pray, I pray that you will not abandon me and that you will give me the strength and courage to give up this world with all its attachments. You are my



only real world. No matter how many times I try to find shelter in the realm of maya, there is no relief. Only you are my shelter, Gurudeva, only you.

O Gurudeva, please also keep me in the service of your divine representative, his holiness Srila B.B. Bodhayan Swami, who is always my watchful well-wisher and gently reminds me that your Divine Grace is ever present in your instructions. Please allow me to follow in his footsteps and serve you always.

Your humble servant,
Ramdas Das

MEETINGS WITH REMARKABLE VAISNAVAS

by Sripad Vidagdha Madhava Das

*om̐ ajṣāna-timirāndhasya jṣānāṣjana-śālākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

There is a famous book with the title, *Meetings with Remarkable Men* in which the author, Gurdjieff writes about remarkable men in his life. This inspires me to think, “Who could be more remarkable than a self-realized pure devotee of the Lord?”

In Bhagavad-gita 10:2, Krishna says such devotees are rare:

*manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu kaścid yatati siddhaye
yatatām api siddhānāṁ kaścin mām vetti
tattvataḥ*

“Out of many thousands among men, one may endeavor for perfection, and of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth.”

In reality, this means that a self-realized pure devotee is one out of hundreds of millions of

human beings. Srila Rupa Goswami also writes that a human birth is very rare, what to speak of pure devotees.

So how can one discover such a rare soul? Arjuna asks a similar question to Krishna in Bhagavad-gita 2:54:

*sthita-prajñasya ka bhasa samadhi-sthasya
kesava
sthita-dhīḥ kim prabhaseta kim asita vrajeta kim*

“Arjuna said, “What are the symptoms of one whose consciousness is merged in Transcendence? How does he speak and how does he act?”

Sri Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja says that all good qualities become manifest in the body of a vaiṣṇava and that only by the presence of these good qualities can one distinguish a vaiṣṇava from a non-vaiṣṇava. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja lists the twenty-six good qualities as follows: (1) He is very kind to everyone. (2) He does not make anyone his enemy. (3) He is truthful (4) He is equal to everyone. (5) No one can find any fault in him. (6) He is magnanimous. (7) He is mild. (8) He is always clean. (9) He is without possessions. (10) He works for everyone’s benefit. (11) He is very peaceful. (12) He is always surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. (13) He has no material desires. (14) He is very meek. (15) He is steady. (16) He controls his senses. (17) He does not eat more than required. (18) He is not influenced by the Lord’s illusory energy. (19) He offers respect to everyone. (20) He does not desire any respect for himself. (21) He is very grave. (22) He is merciful. (23) He is friendly. (24) He is poetic. (25) He is expert. (26) He is silent.

In the 3rd verse of siksastakam starting *trnad api sunicena*, Lord Caitanya stresses that one can only chant the Holy Names of Krishna constantly when one is extremely humble. This is the crown jewel of a pure devotee.



I feel in my heart that I have met at least four pure vaisnavas in the last 40 years, which is remarkable in itself when you think how rare they are. One of these, who manifested all of the above qualities, is Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja.

The first time I met Srila B. P. Puri Goswami, I felt a powerful presence. I had only felt this once before when I was first introduced to my gurudev, Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Maharaja. On both occasions I was invited to accompany another person to go see them. In the case of Srila Sridhar Maharaja, it was a neurophysicist who had been initiated the year before. After paying my obeisances, I sat in awe because I could feel I was in the presence of a great soul that had no pretence - I was speechless. I was feeling relieved that I was with a devotee who could carry on a conversation with him because I felt I had nothing worthy to say.

My first meeting with Srila B.P. Puri Goswami was with a British devotee who needed to identify the type of Salagram sila that he had been given, so he could proper worship. The meeting took place at Chetla Gaudiya Math near Kalighat in Kolkatta, in a majestic building with a large courtyard. When we knocked on Maharaja's upstairs room door, Srila Puri Maharaja opened it and invited us in. After offering my obeisances, I again felt the remarkable presence of a great soul, but this time, I felt very relaxed. I never felt so at home anywhere in my entire life.

The second time I saw Srila B.P. Puri Goswami was when he arrived at the 500th anniversary of the appearance of Mahaprabhu's appearance in Kolkata. Srila Sridhar Maharaja had sent myself and a few other devotees from Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math to attend this Gaudiya event. The Prime Minister of India and the Governor of Bengal attended as well, as did most all of the senior Gaudiya vaisnavas from different missions. But the event of the evening did not

happen with the speeches on stage, it was with the arrival of Srila B. P. Puri Goswami. I was completely taken by surprise at the overwhelming, spontaneous enthusiasm that rippled through the crowd as he emerged from the car and how eager everyone was to say something to him and escort him up onto the stage. The love and respect everyone had for him was contagious. It was then that I understood that Srila Puri Maharaja was a luminary in the Gaudiya Sampradaya that had transcended all their differences.

The third meeting was when Srila B.P. Puri Goswami came to Srila Sridhar Maharaja's Math for a visit. Besides the personal time these two great souls spent together, they both came for morning darshan. Once seated in similar chairs, Srila Sridhar Maharaja respectfully introduced Srila B. P. Puri Goswami and then said, "Ask him any question. He can answer anything." So the questions of the morning were directed to Srila Sridhar Maharaja's honored guest and godbrother, Srila B. P. Puri Goswami.

A few years later, Srila Puri Maharaja just happened to visit Srila Sridhar Maharaja's Math again a few days before he departed from this world. Srila B.S. Govinda Maharaja knew that Srila Sridhar Maharaja's departure was imminent and begged Srila Puri Maharaja to stay a few days more and place Srila Sridhar Maharaja in samadhi, which he graciously did.

And a few years after that, I had an opportunity to come to India and I had a few serious questions about my ongoing spiritual life and went to Srila B.P. Puri Goswami newly developing Math in Mayapura. So, at this fourth meeting, Srila Puri Goswami graciously gave me his darshan and patiently and decisively answered my questions. In this way, I embraced Srila Puri Maharaja as one of my gurus.

One of the wonderful things about pure vaisnavas is that they can have very different temperaments or personalities, but Krishna is



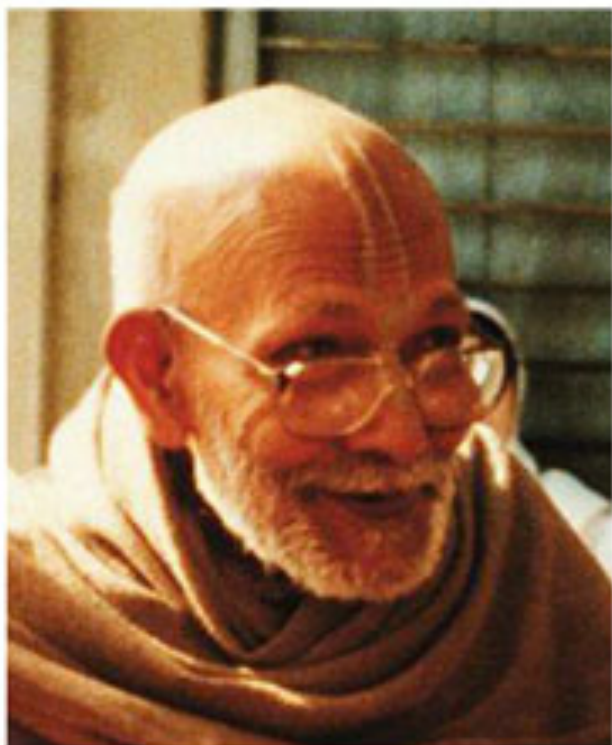
pleased to express Himself through them because they are always in His holy presence.

Although my association with Srila B.P. Puri Goswami was quite limited, I feel within my heart the remembrance of his purity and humility. I feel I was touched by that purity and blessed. And I am certainly blessed by the association of his foremost disciple, Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Maharaja who is carrying his mood and blessings around the world.

Srila Rupa Goswami states that associating 1/11th of a second with a pure devotee is enough for liberation. To see, or experience, that purity once in one's lifetime is enough to convince oneself that Krishna Consciousness is real and the only path worth aspiring for.

Your aspiring servant,

The lowly,
Vidagdha Madhava Das



GLORIFICATIONS

by Sripad Govardhana Das

To all the assembles Vaisnavas and enlightened souls: please accept my prostrated obeisances.

It is with a heavy heart and a deep appreciation for the opportunity and understanding of the immense personal fortune that this insignificant scoundrel has somehow been able to establish a sublime connection with our beloved Guru Maharaja, our Spiritual Father, His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja.

Continuously begging for Guru Maharaja's mercy, while honoring his compassionate willingness to grant initiation to this lost soul, I am consumed by a great sense of gratitude. Arriving at his lotus feet after having searched for his grace across millions of lifetimes of material bewilderment is the beginning of a true and meaningful existence. Being blessed by his continuous divine association the greatest challenges remains, namely: to extinguish the raging fire of material desires and through his grace and by his infinite mercy become fully engaged in the glorious prospect of devotional activities. To seek purity filled with love of God inspired by his instructions and the practical knowledge of divinity delivered to this hungry soul by our beloved Gurudeva is the definition of an honorable and purposeful life.

Guru Maharaja without your blessings and guidance, I am finished with no capabilities to make any progress beyond this material realm. Please hear my prayer and acknowledge this call for help so that I do not continue to drown in this temporal morass, the ocean of birth and death. Through your Grace, and by your mercy, there is hope and with that knowledge I will endeavor day by day to honor your example and the living presence of your teachings in our lives. Please accept this humble offering at your lotus feet on this glorious day,



which gives us the opportunity to show our deep heartfelt appreciation for the blessings and gift of divine association that you have provided to us in this life.

Your servant,
Govardhana Das

OFFERINGS & GLORIFICATIONS

*by His Holiness Srila Sarvatmananda Puri
Swami Maharaja*

Srila Bhakti Pramod Puri Maharaja appeared in this world only to benefit others. He was endowed with natural humility and unfathomable knowledge. His personality reflected the descriptions of the spiritual master as we find detailed in the Vedic scriptures. Srila Puri Maharaja's form appeared very gracious and spiritually attractive even at the venerable age of 100 years. The Kularnava rahasya says, *ingita akaravit prajnah*. One can detect the internal conscience of the spiritual master from his physical appearance. This is so because the outside and the inside of Sri Guru are one. The whole body and particularly the eyes of Srila Gurudeva are a mirror of his pure conscience. Another characteristic of the spiritual master is vichakshanah, which means that he does not disturb the spiritual feelings of anybody.

Srila Puri Maharaja departed at the age of 102. He preached tirelessly up to the age of 100 years, when the conditions of his body did not allow him to speak any more. We saw a flow of divine energy coming from the figure of Srila Puri Maharaja. He applied the ointment of divine knowledge (*jnananjana*) to the eyes of uncountable aspirants on the path back to God. Srila Puri Maharaja preached the science of God fearlessly with the desire to rescue the conditioned souls all over the world. At the age of 89, in 1987, he established Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math responding to the desire of his

disciples. He was never attached to increasing his following. He never presented allurements or material benefits to attract followers. Everyone wanted naturally to follow him for he was such a detached vaisnava.

Srila Puri Maharaja always reminded others about the hellish conditions of life. In this way he was very merciful to all living entities. He wrote innumerable articles for the *Nadiya Prakash* to uplift the people of this age and the devotees read them with great interest and reverence. He spent several years publishing spiritual literature.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur appreciated very much the attachment for the scriptures of his own disciple, Pranavananda Brahmachari (Puri Maharaja's name as a brahmachari) and bestowed upon him two titles, *Pratnavidyalankar* and *Mahopadeshak*. These recognitions came from a very sober, thoughtful and illustrious source such as Srila Saraswati Thakur. They cannot be taken lightly and should be accepted as most authentic and meaningful. By giving him the title *Mahopadeshak*, Srila Saraswati Thakur recommended Pranavananda Brahmachari as one of his most competent disciples, someone who could give relevant instructions to others in spiritual matters. The title *Pratnavidyalankar* implies that the knowledge acquired by Pranavananda Brahmachari was indeed most refined and effulgent.

Srila Bhakti Pramod Puri Maharaja was a dispassionate speaker well versed in the truth about Lord Chaitanya and Sri Sri Radha Krishna. He could speak very charmingly. By hearing him, whoever was overwhelmed with lust, anger, greed or any other mental trouble, would immediately become free of all such difficulties. He was very affectionate to the devotees, sober, merciful and had a spontaneous tendency to smile while speaking.



May the glories of Om Vishnupada Srila Bhakti Pramod Puri Maharaja spread in all the corners of the universe!

Wishing you the Lord's Blessings & Mercy in all your schedules and activities!

With Love, Blessings and good wishes

At His Lotus Feet,
Sarvatmananda Puri Swami

GLORIFICATION

by Sripad Janardan Dasadhikari

All Glories to Sree Sree Guru and Gouranga!
All Glories to All the Devotees of Sree Bhagavan!

I beg all devotees to please accept my prostrated obeisances and at the same time forgive me for all my past and present offenses committed with and without my knowledge.

I am considered to be an "old" disciple of Guru Maharaja but I have no qualifications. I don't know any slokas, I can't sing a melodious bhajan if my life depended on it and I haven't performed any real seva during my lifetime.

Yet I cling to the lotus feet of Guru Maharaja as he continues to provide shelter and solace to my heart. During the most difficult periods of my life he has always been there, like last year when I almost died of cancer and he gave me company, inspiration and peace, regularly appearing.

Guru Maharaja deepened my love for Lord Jagannatha, sending Lakshmi Priya and myself many years ago on our first mystical visit to Nilacala Hill. Guru Maharaja told me before leaving that the reason Lord Jagannatha has His arms outstretched is because He is ready to embrace all of us.

Guru Maharaja has been teaching me from the very beginning about non-sectarianism, being non-judgmental, humility, and respecting and loving every living entity.

Although a complete chandala, Guru Maharaja accepted me and slowly, over the years he has been transforming my heart.

And although I have no good qualifications I have the great fortune of having one drop of faith and this drop of faith has saved my life, by the Grace of Guru Maharaja.

Janardana das

SRI SRI GURU GAURANGA JAYATAH

by Srimati Govinda Mohini Dasi, Sripad Sahadev Das, Srimati Sudevi Devi Dasi, Sripad Vrajeshwar Das, Srimati Padmavati Devi Dasi, and Sripad Mahananda Das

Our most worshipful Srila Guru Maharaja,

Please accept our most sincere, respectful and repeated dandavat pranams at your lotus feet.

Srila Guru maharaja, we are the most unqualified, insignificant and useless souls whom you have bestowed your mercy upon. By your unlimited compassion upon us you have appeared just for our benefit. You have always had extreme patience, tolerance and love for us all, without discrimination. You are the embodiment of humility, kindness, and sweetness. Just by being in your presence all the turmoil and stresses of our lives fades away and we feel protected and encouraged in our tiny attempt towards our Supreme Goal.

We remember how you guided us in your soft sweet voice. You humbly made a very simple



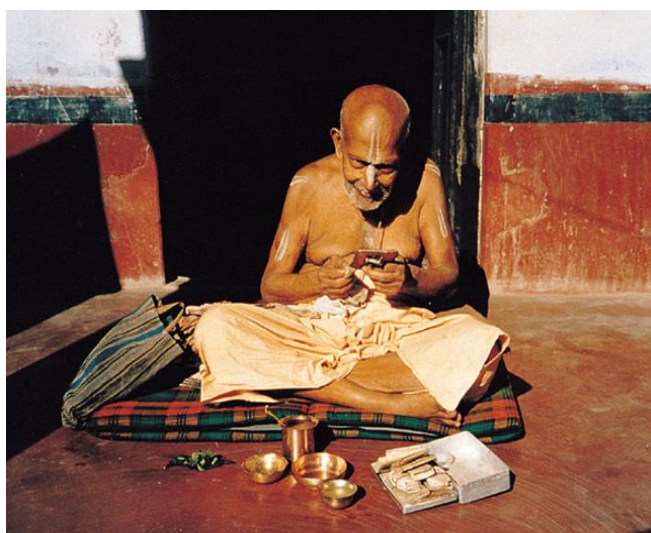
yet most important and supremely beneficial request. With folded palms you requested: "Mother, please do not forget this old son."

Just being able to properly follow that one request is the goal and perfection of all aspiring vaisnavas. For as we remember you our hearts of stone will melt and be free of all unwanted and impure qualities. Only by the mercy of Guru can one receive Krsna Bhakti. Without your mercy Guru maharaja there is no hope for us.

Please Srila Guru Maharaja, please overlook our numerous faults as you had when you mercifully accepted us. Please bless us with the ability to follow your request so that we may always remember you.

Your disobedient servants,

Govinda Mohini Dasi,
Sahadev Das,
Sudevi Devi Dasi,
Vrajeshwar Das,
Padmavati Devi Dasi, and
Mahananda Das



REFLECTIONS ON DUTY AND LOVE

by Srimati Subhashree Panigrahi

Our contemporary world is full of strife, tension and intolerance. Rampant intolerance is taking a most violent shape and turning the social fabric into pieces. Inner tension of every individual is converging at a hypertensive social order where peace becomes misnomer. We want more and more of everything in material terms without paying any heed to our actual requirements. In such situations only the mind rules, the body acts and the senses rock and roll for their gratification whereas the soul seems as if has been put to a forever mute mode. In consequence, despite their best efforts people are mostly unhappy.

The confusion mainly pertains to a false definition of happiness. When one puts his best efforts to seek happiness in terms of materialistic pleasures and achievements it remains elusive. Like a thirsty desert traveler runs after a mirage in the hope of getting water but dies in thirst only. At that moment he realizes that what he presumed to be real water was nothing but his own illusion. Illusion appears as truth because of ignorance and due to a lack of knowledge. The false identities pride, false sense of achievement gives false pleasure that is momentary sense gratification. How can everything false lead to truth? When the subject (*karta*) who is searching for happiness does not know who he is; he is covered from tip to toe with a cloak of false degrees (*mithya upadhis* and *upadhaukanas*); the methods used by him are imbued with vanity and selfishness; the goal, the object of all his attempts or what he seeks to achieve (*lakshya*) is also false as that is exclusively confined to material gains; then what would be the outcome? Thus, the precious human life just gets wasted. Maybe due to karma of the present birth he would get another inferior body (*yonis*) in the infinite cycle of painful birth and death, moving from a dark cave to a still darker one.



But, this darkness of ignorance can be removed only with the mercy of a spiritual master (*guru*). *Gu* means darkness and *ru* means removal of it. Sadguru only enables him to make a distinction between transient and transcendental. As a result of his causeless mercy a true disciple leaves these worldly attachments and starts seeking transcendental love of Supreme Lord Krishna. The jiva then comes to realize that only Sri Krishna is the Absolute Truth, *advaya* (non-dual) jnana and internalizes Krishna's expansion as Brahma, Paramatma, and Bhagavan.

In contrast to the unrest or violent social order prevailing at present, it should have been a contented and peace loving one. But, this is possible only when individuals living in it remain truly happy and live peacefully. The human being is considered as the crown creation because Supreme Lord has bestowed on them all finer qualities i.e., intelligence, knowledge, memory, skills and above all a loving heart. But, all these qualities flourish fully only when an individual comes to a state of Krishna Consciousness and surrenders at the lotus feet of Supreme Lord, Sri Krishna.

We all are born under different circumstances. The variegated nature of social conditioning results in differences in standard of living and worldly achievements. But, the jiva residing in all living entities is one and the same. The jiva is a spiritual spark, particle of Supreme Lord but has got a distinct separate identity to remain as eternal servant of the Lord. Yet, as a captive of Lord's illusory energy, the jiva instead of striving for the eternal source of happiness through service to Sri Krishna forgets its origin and forgets its relation with Sri Krishna. It starts owning the body and acts done through the same (*karma*) and the fruits of karma. Birth after birth it continues.

Just like the meanings and ragas of different songs may vary and convey different meanings but, only the true musician knows that the tone

underneath every syllable and each word gets converted into one of the seven notes and ultimately each note emanates from one pranav akshar, "Om" which is eternal and *Brahmavachak*. Similarly, our body may belong to different caste and creed but ultimately it is abode of jiva. Sadguru who is none other than Sri Krishna can only make the Jiva realize its forgotten relation with Supreme. In this infinite birth-death cycle, at some point of time with the help of good deeds (*sukriti*) gathered over several births and sincere self-seeking the Jiva finds the shelter of Sadguru and with his mercy, the Jiva begets its old relation with Sri Krishna that is its real identity. Sadguru possesses many exalted qualifications. Since he is a pure devotee, self-realized, liberated soul and part of the transcendental, only he can impart transcendental knowledge, Krishna Consciousness, to his disciple.

A Krishna Conscious devotee realizes that Krishna is the controller of everything. He surrenders to Lord with a firm faith that come what may, the mighty arms of Sri Krishna will protect him. He thus enters into a state of fearlessness. Whatever he does, he offers to Sri Krishna, whatever place, body and senses exists, all these are meant for the Lord to dwell in. In this context Srimad Bhagavatam says:

*atmavasyam idam visvam yat kincj jagatyam jagat
tene tyaktena bhunjitha ma grdhah kasya svid dhanam*"

"Whatever exists in this universe is the dwelling place of the Lord. Enjoy wealth that is given by the Lord and do not hanker for what is not given by Him. Whose wealth is it, except the Lord's?" (*Srimad Bhagavatam* 8:1:10)

One should enjoy only one's share. After taking permission from the Lord through sincere prayer, with the spirit of a sincere servant of Lord a devotee accepts the portion of wealth that is required only for his sustenance; nothing



excess. But, other family members may object to such behavior if they are not in consonance with the devotee. Therefore, Svayambhuva Manu in the above mentioned verse counters such materialistic people in rebuking manner: “Whose wealth is this?”

Similarly, again in Srimad Bhagavatam (7:14:8), this has been mentioned, “One may claim proprietorship over as much wealth as required to maintain his body. He who desires proprietorship over more than that is considered a thief, and he deserves to be punished.”

Isopanishad also says:

*“Isavasyam idam sarvam yat kinca jagatyam jagat
Tena tyaktena bhunjitha ma grdhah kasya svid dhanam”*

“This visible world, and whatever exists beyond perception, is under the control of the Lord. Because of this you should enjoy only what is allotted to you by the Lord through your karma. Do not hanker for more than that. Whose property is it?”

In this manner, if everybody would enjoy what is allotted to him or her, then there would be no deprivation, discrimination or violence. Though it may seem utopian to some but, it is perfectly possible. It is just not a wishful thinking - by spreading Krishna Consciousness it will get translated into practice. Our Param Gurudeva, Bhakta Siromani, His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja, endeavored towards spreading these Ishovakyam, divine messages. With all encompassing love and sympathy he used to say: “Every human being has to exactly consider what his or her duty is. This self-scrutiny is necessary for one and all, including all men and women of all age groups. This is not any superficial mundane ritual but, there has to be a mark on the heart of every single

person.” He continued further, “Why only humans, we should have a still broader vision. We have to understand what every single Jiva is doing here. We have to understand why the Lord created all these living entities. The moving and non-moving beings (*sthavara, jangamadi sarva*) are all His creations. The Supreme Lord desires everyone to join the great game of divine love and relish the ecstasies of divine relationship. But, this love for Krishna cannot be compared to the love that exists in this world. This worldly love and emotions are momentary, like a spectator reacts to the theatrical performances of actors on stage. The love for Krishna, as experienced by pure devotees, is eternal, natural and spontaneous. The prime objective of all holy places (*Maths and Mandirs*) should be to enable mankind to taste this kind of pure love. Whereas, the prime objective of each one of us from the core of our hearts should be to seek association of pure devotees who have experienced and realized this highest love.”*

This message of His Divine Grace certainly transgresses the boundaries created by time and place and forever unites all human hearts.

**Based on the documentary, ‘Developing the eye of love by Bhakti’ Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja, Published on June 14, 2013*

Offered at the lotus feet,
Subhashree Panigrahi

HOMAGE

by an anonymous vaisnava

It is a matter of great fortune that I have had the chance of listening to some of the divine blissful glories of an exalted Vaisnava my Grand Spiritual Master His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakur.



He is regarded as the crest jewel in the vaisnava community for his dedication to carry out the instructions of his Spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada (Jagadguru Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakura).

In this regard, I heard from my Gurudeva that Srila Prabhupada gave Srila Puri Maharaja a pen and he kept on fulfilling the instructions of Srila Prabhupada of writing till he entered the divine pastimes of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath.

In the advanced age (late nineties), his hand used to shake a lot and sometime the written words were not clear enough to read. Hence, Srila Gurudev once requested him to narrate and proposed that Srila Gurudev can write his narration. However, showing deep compassion and strong dedication to carry out the instructions of Srila Prabhupada 'as it is', Srila Puri Maharaja said that, "Baba, Srila Prabhupada instructed me to write, not to narrate. He also said I am just the writer and Srila Prabhupada is the narrator. If there comes a time, when I am not able to carry out the instructions as it is, I would prefer not doing it rather than carrying it out the way not originally wished by Srila Prabhupada."

Once Srila Puri Maharaja was displaying the pastimes of illness. The doctor diagnosed it to be acute pneumonia and due to his advanced age, he was requested to take complete rest. Special instructions were given to ensure that he doesn't speak.

However, one prominent vaisnava from ISKCON paid him a visit. He desired to hear the glories of Srila Narottam Das Thakur from Srila Puri Maharaja. Srila Gurudev explained the physical condition of Srila Puri Maharaja and also shared the instructions of the attending doctor. However, the vaisnava had deep desire to hear from Srila Puri Maharaja and requested for only five minutes. Hearing all this, Srila Puri Maharaja out of compassion and his deep

dedication towards singing the glories of Guru Varga, agreed to speak.

But he didn't speak for 5-10 or 30 mins. He kept on speaking for many hours. Srila Gurudev had to intervene and request Srila Puri Maharaja to stop.

I wish to share one more incident as shared by Srila Gurudev. Once Srila Puri Maharaja was busy writing till late at night and Srila Gurudev requested him to take rest as it was very late in night. However, Srila Puri Maharaj told Srila Gurudev that he would take rest after finishing in few more minutes. He also asked Srila Gurudev to take rest. When the morning bell rang (before Mangala Aratika), Srila Gurudev saw Srila Puri Maharaj was engaged in writing, he hadn't taken any rest for whole night. Srila Gurudev again requested him to take rest but he said there is no time to rest, now is the time to chant.

He is rightly regarded the embodiment of Sriman Mahaprabhu's third verse of the *Shikshashtakam*. He had deep compassion for all of his God brothers and he displayed deep humility. He put great emphasis on the teachings of Guru Varga 'as it is'. He stressed the importance of attentive chanting of the Holy name, which will lead to the higher realms of divine service, as without the basic building blocks of devotion, the higher topics of divine pastimes cannot be realized.

His divine glories are unending, I prostrate before him and beg for forgiveness for my anarthas which renders me useless for service. I know for sure I am not qualified to go any further without his mercy. I hope that by his mercy I'll be able to take his divine instructions to heart. I beg for forgiveness for any mistakes herein - hopefully the vaisnavas will not take offense to the mistakes committed.

Aspiring to be a servant,
Dasanudas



HOMAGE

by Lakshmipriya Devi Dasi

*om ajšana-tirmirandhasya jšanašana-salakaya
caksur unmilitam yena tasmai Sri-Gurave Namah*

I was born in the darkest ignorance and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisance unto him.

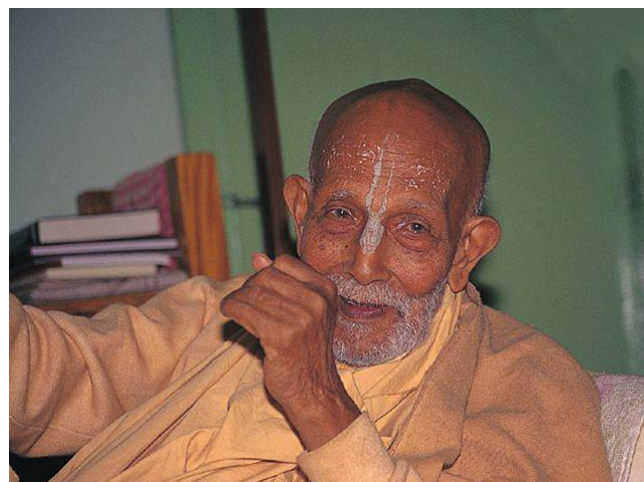
It was at the end of the monsoon season, October 1991, during Durga Puja week when I met His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja at his Mayapur Math. That morning Guru Maharaj was in his room giving initiations. He would chant each bead of the aspiring disciple's mala with utmost care, a gentle but potent touch, before placing it in the hands of his new disciple. I'll always remember the atmosphere of that room, imbued with the devotion, peace, gratefulness, simplicity and humility of the venerable, almost a century old sage. I cannot explain the happiness I experienced that blessed day. I left Guru Maharaja's room full of contentment. It seemed to me that every atom around me knew it. It was magical. Oh, what a nectar! My heart was certain that I had met a pure devotee and I fell in love. Like a silly child I smiled and laughed all the way back to the ashram. I had found my Guru Maharaja. On the 17th of November Guru Maharaja took my husband, Janardana, and myself under his shelter and gave us initiation. During the following weeks of our stay in Mayapur Guru Maharaja did what a loving father does for his children: He taught us with his example and gave us instructions throughout our stay. One night He called us to his room and told us that he had made arrangements for our marriage ceremony and gave us instructions as ghrihastha. Another day I was troubled by the thought of what would happen after I left his shelter. Guru Maharaja reading my heart said: "Mother don't be afraid, our spiritual life is our only life. It's eternal.

This is the path. Pray. Just concentrate on attaining the lotus feet of our Lord. As I am here now, it is the same when you're there. This is not a material relationship; it is eternal." The seeds that Guru Maharaj planted during those weeks continue to sprout again and again with new meaning in my present and certainly have rescued me from many trials of material life. This is causeless mercy: taking unqualified living entities under his shelter and praying for their wellbeing. This is Guru Maharaja.

I don't have enough neurons in my brain to produce a worthy homage of Guru Maharaja's sublime qualities nor sufficient tongues to glorify him enough. I offer my humble obeisance and thank over and over again to that merciful spiritual master, my dear Gurudeva. Guru Maharaja, on this holy day of your advent please forgive any offense I have committed and please let me thank all the vaisnavas whom with their good wishes opened the path that led me to your lotus feet. Oh Gopinath! May I never forget the guidance of my divine spiritual master, who always honored you with love and devotion.

All glories to Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja!

Lakshmipriya devi dasi



OBEISANCES

by Srimati Anuradha Devi Dasi

Dear Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja, First please accept my most prostrated obeisances. I was shy to write this humble offering for I am very likely one of the last fortunate souls to find refuge at your lotus feet and to be rescued by your mercy.

I came to Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math when I was 21 years old searching for a spiritual master, I was informed that I would meet multiple saints at your vyasa puja. But when I finally reached Jagannath Puri dham, your vyasa puja ceremony had already passed and mostly everyone had left. I feel that I was praying for pebbles and you offered me the most amazing matchless gift. What you have mercifully given to me cannot be expressed in words, there are not enough tears in this world, nor oceans big enough to fill with the deep gratitude I have for your kindness and mercy in accepting me as your humble disciple.

You gave me a glimpse of the spiritual world, my first darshan with you is engraved in my heart forever. I saw not a man laying in a bed, but a gopi with lotus feet and a golden halo around her head, the sight was so divine that my eyes started showering tears, I fell like a piece of straw on the ground, never ever wanting to leave your door matt, I begged to be a dog or an insect that could stay at your door matt, I had no idea that a pure soul existed on this earth, but you opened up my eyes and for the first time I could see.

Guru Maharaja you gave life to this worthless human, it was as if I could breath for the first time. At that moment I took immediate shelter of your lotus feet and I wanted to serve you with all my heart for eternity. By your unconditional mercy and your mercy alone, you made my wish come true. You arranged everything so that I could serve you in this life

time, via the medium of your divine successor Srila Bhakti Bibhuda Bodhayan Maharaja, by taking diksha from him and surrendering my heart and soul again via a more direct connection to your heart.

I cannot express in a simple offering with my limited words, how indebted I am to your causeless mercy. I can only pray that you continue to engage me life after life in your divine service. I pray that you will tolerate all my inability to properly serve you and your successor, and that you will keep me at your door matt where I belong.

Your insignificant servitor,
Anuradha das anu dasi

HOMAGE

by Srimati Navamalika Devi Dasi

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja, the embodiment of *trinad api sunicena* was the greatest inspiration in my spiritual life. Although I did not have the fortune to have his direct darshan, I was pulled by his invisible mercy, by his humble nature, and by his tireless speech on Bhagavata dharma. Due to the causeless mercy of Sriman Mahaprabhu, I was engaged in the service towards preserving his lectures after he departed from this material world. That was my spiritual call. That was the root cause of my life-changing experience. It was through hearing (*sravanam*) of Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja's Harikatha, that I got inspired. So much so that I had the greed to be connected with this Guru-varga. At the same time in his nityalila, Srila Puri Maharaja knew somehow I could serve with my little intellect in his *brihat-mridanga* (publication) seva. I feel very fortunate to think that I had this much of *sukriti*. Due to that *sukriti* only, was I able to take shelter at the lotus feet of his dearmost disciple Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan



Maharaja who is as loving and compassionate as his Gurudev.

Today on this auspicious day, I humbly pay my obeisances to his lotus feet and beg for his mercy from the eternal abode so that I can satisfy my Guru-varga with my seva by fulfilling my Gurudev's desire.

I cannot stop myself without quoting these beautiful pearls of wisdom from one of his lectures which I will always remember in my daily practice: *"Always pray for the mercy of Krishna, the guru and the vaisnavas. Remember that progress in devotion depends on progress in humility – that is the art of sadhana."*

Gaura Haribol!
Navamalika dasi



LOVE & GRATITUDE

by Srimati Rasapriya Devi Dasi

My Dear Srila Guru Maharaja,

Please accept my most humble and loving obeisances.

Almost every disciple, at the certain stage, thinks that his or her Gurudeva loves him or her more than anyone else in the world. It happens due to the Guru's ability to know the heart of the disciple and give him exactly what his heart needs.

My heart was speckled with holes when You found me. I was battered and dirty like a homeless dog. Frustrated and neglected. My holey heart had no ability to love, to give, or be compassionate. So you've started repairing it, filling these multiple holes with Your love and care, with Your thoughtfulness, and you're your affection.

Sometimes it seems that there is no limit to your love. There is no edge of your capacity to sacrifice yourself. There is no point where you can stop, saying: "This is enough! I gave out enough!" No matter what is the response you continue to give. Because sometimes it's really not enough. Sometimes a small hole turns up to be a deepest well and you need all love in this world to fill it up. But even then you do not stop giving - this is how much love is in your heart.

You planted a seed of love and devotion in my heart. The land was dry. And there was not much growth in the beginning. But you didn't seem to be disappointed or frustrated. You just kept watering the sprout with Your endless care and affection. You observed its growth, giving the nurture and protection it needed. This is how much dedication and faith you have. This is how much you believe in your disciples. You never give up. Always have hope, ready to give your encouragement and support.



The human brain has a function that helps us adjust to everything in our life. It improves our ability to survive physically and mentally, but may make us forgetful and ungrateful. With that function inside we become adjustable even to severe sufferings and pain. But at the same time we are easily getting used to be adored, to be taken care of, and to be nourished. And it used to happen to me! How many times I took you for granted. And still you were there for me. How many times I didn't show you due respect! How many times I was angry, ungrateful, forgetful, resentful and upset with you. And how many times I rejected you. Still you were there for me. This is how much forgiveness you have to your disciples. This how much love you have for me and for all of us.

I do believe that Guru is a form of Krishna in a disciple's life. And the biggest gift that you gave me being my Guru is the sense of Krishna's presence in every aspect and in every moment of my life. You showed me His charisma, His wit and His tricks. You showed me His wisdom, foresight and gumption. You showed me His love, affection and care. You made me feel totally enveloped with His gentle support and guidance, which gradually lead me to His Adobe as His eternal servant. You filled my heart with gratitude, with faith and hope. You filled up every single hole in it, making it capable to feel love and give back.

There is nothing in this world that can bend or break my firm faith in Krishna or you, my dearest Gurudev. Nothing can turn me away from You or from the path I've chosen. Nothing can withdraw my attention from the only desire I have - to be a Krishna's servant life after life after life and make you happy with every step I make.

Today, on the auspicious day of your appearance, I offer innumerable obeisances to you, wishing you to continue your loving Mission in this world with all possible success

and appreciation. I wish you to continue be a perfect, loving and profound guide for all your disciples. I wish you to continue spreading The Holy Name with the same level of purity, sincerity and dedication that you constantly show by all your actions and teachings.

May The Divine Couple, Sri Sri Radha Krishna choose you again and again to be an Ambassador of Their glories and an embodiment of Their love, wisdom, and beauty.

With lots of love and gratitude,
Rasapriya dasi

SINCERE HOMAGE

By Srimati Ranga Devi Dasi

My sincere homage to Param Gurudeva Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja on his day of appearance.

Dear Gurudeva, in our illusory world, people are willing to sacrifice your soul to get success in any way. We are blessed with your simple teachings in Bhakti, throughout the whole world, although you have never even left India in his lifetime. When we recognize the Lord Krishna's authority, we do not have to go anywhere, knowing that eligible souls within reach. Accepting the quota disciples that Mahaprabhu sent to you, your heart has promoted the awakening of sincere love and surrender to Lord Krishna. Rejecting the repeated proclamations of the mind, which always want power and fame, you joined their hands in surrender to God.

My beloved Param Gurudeva, I am grateful for bringing my poor heart, the truth, which is accompanied by love of Godhead. I hope, always Param Gurudeva that I can be a loyal disciple of Gopinath Gaudiya Math, always ensuring the truth and also equality among all the disciples regardless of caste, nationality, or



social status. Inequality has never been the way of dignity.

Accept my sincere love,
Ranga Devi with my beloved Mahaprabhu

HOMAGE

by Srimati Anika Devi Dasi

Let me first offer my respectful obeisances unto all vaisnava devotees. It is said that they are like the desire trees and that they fulfill the desires of every-one and are full of compassion for all the fallen conditioned souls. Jai Hari Bol!

My great misfortune at this time is that I am so un-educated and I know nothing of this wonderful personality, His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaj. I am most fallen and wretched. I feel very foolish. I will have to become more versed in all the great saintly personalities and vaisnava acaryas otherwise my heart and mind will not be satisfied. What can I do? This is my humble offering. I have nothing to offer besides my attempt at sincere gratitude for what I am sure is the wonderful and magnanimous soul that is Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Maharaja.

Thank you at allowing me this opportunity to meditate on His lotus feet and to garner a desire to learn more about Him and the other illustrious visnava acaryas.

Hare Krsna!

Your aspiring servant perpetually,
Bhaktin Annique



SRILA MADHVACARYA & HIS BALAKRISHNA DEITY IN UDUPI

Adapted from 'A brief sketch of the Life and Teachings of Sri Madhvacharya'¹

During his stay at the South Indian town of Udupi, Madhvacharya established the Sri Krishna temple. At that time, he used to daily bathe in the ocean. On one such day, a remarkable incident took place. In the early hours of the morning, as he set out for his ocean bath, he was inspired to compose a series of prayers glorifying his beloved Lord Sri Krishna. As he walked the three miles to the seashore, with consummate ease, he composed the first five chapters of the famous *Dwadasa stotram*.

Whilst he was composing the stotram, he was meditating deeply on Sri Krishna. At that time, it occurred to him that Sri Krishna wanted to come to Udupi for the benefit of His devotees there. He felt great joy on receiving this premonition and his heart danced in ecstasy. Even as he continued his ablutions, he joyfully sang the stotram to himself.

After bathing, he went to the sand and sat down for further meditation. After some time of meditation, he suddenly opened his eyes and saw a ship in distress. Using his chadar, he signaled to the ship and guided it safely to the shore. The captain of the ship, which was coming from Dwaraka, approached Madhvacharya and begged him to accept something from him as a token of gratitude. Madhvacharya happily accepted a large chunk of gopi-chandan that had been used as ballast in the ship.

The clod of gopi-chandan was then taken to Udupi and washed at the lake Madhva sarovara. To everyone's surprise, there emerged a magnificent deity of Bala Krishna holding a

churning rod in one hand and a churning rope in the other. This deity is said to have been carved originally by Vishvakarma and given to Rukmini devi, in Dwaraka for her worship.

The elated Madhvacharya then performed an abhishekam and puja of Sri Bala Krishna deity. After that, a group of 30 men tried to carry the deity to the Math, but could not do so. It is surmised that Sri Krishna personally entered the deity induced by the loving service of His devotee Madhvacharya. Due to the presence of the Lord, the deity was impossible to be carried by 30 men. However, Madhvacharya, who was an incarnation of the powerful wind-God (*Vayu Deva*) could carry it easily. He installed the deity at his Math. Later that day, Madhvacharya completed his composition of *Dwadasa stotram*.

Madhvacharya personally regulated the method of worship of the deity. He codified the procedures in minutest detail and led the way by conducting the rituals of worship in person. He established an elaborate program of deity worship that included nine daily offerings.



¹ Published on sadgurus-saints-sages.com



MONKEY RENUNCIATION

by His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri
Goswami Thakur
an excerpt from *The Associates of Caitanya*

*dāsa-rāghunāthasya pūrvākhyā rasa-mañjarī |
amum kecit prabhāṣante śrīmatīm rati-mañjarīm |
bhānumaty-ākhyā kecit āhus taṁ nāma-bhedataḥ ||*

"Rāghunātha Das is ascribed three different names from his previous identity as a manjari in Krishna-līla: Rasa Manjari, Rati Manjari and Bhānumatī." (*Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 186)

Rāghunātha Das was born in around 1494 A.D in the town of Saptagram to the wealthy Hiranya and Govardhana Majumdar. Even though Rāghunātha was the only heir to his parents' great fortune, he was indifferent to riches from his childhood. He had his first opportunity to see Mahāprabhu when the Lord came to Shantipur after taking sannyas. As soon as he saw the Lord, Rāghunātha fell to his feet in a swoon of divine love. Rāghunātha's father, Govardhana Majumdar, was accustomed to always serve Advaita Acharya with faith and devotion, and thus Advaita Prabhu was predisposed to show kindness to the young Rāghunātha. He thus made sure that Rāghunātha received the Lord's remnants for as long as he remained in Shantipur.

When the Lord departed for Puri, Rāghunātha returned to his home in Saptagram, but he had been transformed and was constantly feeling intense separation from the Lord. Seeing him in this condition, his father surrounded Rāghunātha by a guard of eleven men, consisting of two Brahmins, four servants and five guards. Even so, Rāghunātha tried to run away in order to join the Lord on several occasions; each time he was caught and brought back. As a result, Rāghunātha became increasingly disheartened.

In 1513, when the Lord made his attempt to visit Vrindavan - although only managing to get

as far as Kānair Nāṭasālā - he returned to Shantipur and again stayed there for a short period of time. Rāghunātha wanted to see the Lord and this time begged his father to give him permission to go to Advaita's house. Govardhana was concerned about his son's intentions. However, he eventually decided to let him go on condition that he would promptly return. He also sent a large entourage of guards to accompany Rāghunātha.

When Rāghunātha saw the Lord, he told Him of his intolerable living situation. He begged the Lord to instruct him how he could be free from bondage to material existence. The all-knowing Lord could understand the depth of Rāghunātha's feeling and offered the following instruction to pacify him:

"Calm yourself and return home. Don't be foolish. It takes time to cross the ocean of material suffering. Don't make a show of 'monkey renunciation' (*markaṭa-vairāgya*) simply to impress others. Enjoy worldly life in a moderate way, and without attachment. Be fixed on Krishna internally while externally dealing with the world in the appropriate fashion. It will not be long before Krishna delivers you." (*Caitanya Caritamrita* 2:16: 237-9)

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur has made the following comments on the word *markaṭa-vairāgya*: "Superficially it appears that monkeys are renounced because they live in the forest, unclothed and without any fixed residence. But actually they are only interested in their sensual enjoyment and have really given up nothing. Such show-bottle renunciation is called *markaṭa-vairāgya*. Real renunciation comes as a by-product of pure devotion. Other types of renunciation that arise out of frustration with material desires cannot last throughout one's life. Due its temporary nature, such renunciation is therefore called *phalgu* (false). Such temporary renunciation is



also known as *śmaśāna-vairāgya*, (the renunciation of the cremation ground)."

One may accept things which are absolutely necessary in order to serve Krishna without becoming absorbed in or attached to them. If one lives in this way, he will not be under the influence of the karmic reactions resulting from the involvement with sense objects.

In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1:2:108), it is said:

*yāvatā syāt sva-nirvāhaḥ svīkuryāt tāvad arthavit |
ādhikye nyūnatāyām ca cyavate paramārthataḥ ||*

"One who knows the ultimate goal of life should accept only as much as he needs to maintain his existence. If he accepts more or less than that, he will fall from that supreme objective."

In his *Durgama- saṅgamanī* commentary, Sri Jiva Goswami explains the word *sva-nirvāhaḥ* with the words *sva-sva-bhakti-nirvāhaḥ*, i.e., a devotee should accept only those material things that will help him render service to the Lord, according to his own individual needs. In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1:2:256), *markaṭa-vairāgya* or *phalgu-vairāgya* has been further explained as follows:

*prāpañcikatayā buddhyā hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ |
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo vairāgyam phalgu kathyate ||*

"When one desiring liberation rejects something related to the Lord, in the understanding that it is material, it is called *phalgu-vairāgya*."

It is a mistake to renounce something which is favorable to the service of Lord Krishna, thinking it to be an ordinary material sense object. All sense objects which are used without personal attachment and in relation to Krishna, are identical to Krishna.

Hearing Mahaprabhu's instruction and taking it to heart, Raghunath returned home and gave up his fervent desire to renounce material life. He instead engaged in his various house-hold duties with a sense of detachment.

GLORIES OF SRILA RAGHUNATH BHATTA GOSWAMI

*by His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri
Goswami Thakur
an excerpt from The Associates of Caitanya*

*raghunāthākhyako bhāṭṭaḥ purā yā rāga-mañjarī |
kṛta-śrī-rādhikā-kunḍa-kuṭīra-vasatiḥ sa tu ||*

"In Krishna-lila, Raghunath Bhatta, who made his residence in a cottage by Radha Kund, was Rāga Manjari." (*Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 185)

One day, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu instructed Raghunath Bhatta Goswami: "Study Srimad Bhagavatam and chant the names of Krishna continuously. The Supreme Lord Krishna will very soon bestow His mercy upon you." After saying this, the Lord embraced Raghunath who then became enlivened with ecstatic love.

The Lord had once been given some unsliced betel and a ten-foot long garland of tulasi leaves which had been worn by Lord Jagannath. He gave the garland and betel to Raghunath Bhatta. Raghunath Bhatta accepted them as worshipable objects, taking care to preserve them. After this, he took the Lord's permission and departed for Vrindavan.

Upon reaching Vrindavan, Raghunath Bhatta put himself under the care of Rupa and Sanatan Goswamis. When he recited the Bhagavatam before them, Raghunath Bhatta would be overwhelmed with ecstatic love for Krishna. By Mahaprabhu's mercy, he experienced the symptoms of ecstatic love - tears, trembling, and faltering of the voice. His eyes filled with tears, his throat became choked, and thus he



would have to stop his recital. His voice was as sweet as a cuckoo's, and he would recite each verse of the Bhagavatam in several melodies. Whenever he recited verses about Krishna's beauty and sweetness, he would be overwhelmed with ecstatic love and become oblivious to the world around him. Upon hearing his recitation, the devotees in his company were also enchanted.

The following description is also given of Sri Raghunath Bhatta Goswami is given in the *Bhakti-ratnākara*:

"As I look upon the samadhi tomb of Raghunath Bhatta, my heart breaks and my eyes are awash with tears. But whose heart is not overjoyed when he hears Raghunath Bhatta Goswami's glories? He was such an expert teacher of all the scriptures that even Bṛhaspati would joyfully cheer upon hearing Raghunath's explanations of vaisnava doctrine. There is nothing to which his discourses on the Bhagavatam can be compared. Even Vyasa himself wishes to sit and listen to him speak, knowing that this will bring him happiness. Even the Gods were astonished when they observed his devotional practices." When the devotees heard Srinivas Acharya glorify Sri Raghunath Bhatta Goswami in this way, they fell to the ground and offered their respects.

SRILA KRISHNA DAS KAVIRAJ GOSWAMI'S VISION OF NITYANANDA PRABHU

*by His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri
Goswami Thakur
an excerpt from The Associates of Caitanya*

In the course of his glorification of Nityananda Prabhu in the Chaitanya Charitamrita, Krishna Das describes the crucial event in his life. He had organized a 24-hour kirtan at his house and amongst those invited was Lord Nityananda's

dear associate, Minaketan Rama Das, who also lived in Jhamatpur.

Minaketan was a great vaisnava who was constantly in a state of devotional trance as he chanted the name of Nityananda Prabhu. While in his ecstatic moods, he would sometimes slap people and sometimes hit them with his flute. In general, his ecstatic behavior was the cause of some astonishment amongst Krishna Das's guests and most came to pay their obeisances and offer him their respects. Gunarnava Mishra, who had been engaged at the festival as a pujari, however did not demonstrate a respectful attitude. This behavior was an indication that Gunarnava Mishra had no faith in Nityananda Prabhu. Rama Das became angry and criticized Mishra, saying, "Just look! This is a second Romaharshan Suta, who did not come forward to show respect when he saw Balaram!" (Chaitanya Charitamrita 1:5:170)

Gunarnava Mishra remained pleased despite having been chastised by Rama Das and simply continued his service to the Deity. At the end of the kirtan festival, when Gunarnava Mishra had left, however, Krishna Das Kaviraj's brother got into an argument with Minaketan Rama Das about what had happened. Krishna Das's brother had strong faith in Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, but lacked similar faith in Nityananda. Upon hearing this, Rama Das felt deeply wounded and he became so angry that he broke his flute and left. The result of this curse was that Krishna Das's brother was doomed to lose whatever devotion he had. In this argument, Krishna Das Kaviraj took the side of Nityananda Prabhu's associate and rebuked his brother:

"These two brothers are one body, equal in every respect. If you do not accept the divinity of Lord Nityananda, you will meet with ruin. To have faith in one while disrespecting the other is as logical as taking the half of a hen that lays the eggs. Better you should be an atheist and deny the divinity of both rather than



a hypocrite who believes in one and not the other.” (Chaitanya Charitamrita 1:5:175-7)

The Lord is influenced by His devotees and gives great importance to even the slightest display of attachment to them. Thus He bestows upon that person all that he desires. Krishna Das writes that by taking the part of Nityananda Prabhu’s associate and chastizing his brother, he received the blessings of Nityananda Prabhu himself. Nitai came to him in a dream and ordered him to go to Vrindavan.



“O Krishna Das! Have no fear. Go to Vrindavan, for there you will attain all things.” After saying this, He indicated the way to Vrindavan by waving His hand and then disappeared with His associates. (Chaitanya Charitamrita 1:5:195-6)

THE LORD’S MERCY ON MURARI GUPTA

by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

Sri Caitanya Bhagavata Madhya 20:51 – 73 and purport

“O Murāri Gupta, go home for now. You have purchased Me because you have understood the glories of Nityananda.” In this way, Murāri became such a recipient of the Lord’s mercy.

When Murāri returned home, his heart was overwhelmed. He would chuckle to himself as he said one thing and did something else. In jubilation he said, “I will eat now.” Then his chaste wife brought lunch for him. Being overwhelmed with love for Lord Caitanya, Murāri Gupta threw handfuls of rice to the floor while calling out, “Eat! Eat!” As he threw rice mixed with ghee to the floor, he repeatedly exclaimed, “Eat Kṛṣṇa! Eat!” On seeing Murāri’s behavior, his chaste wife laughed. She repeatedly brought more rice and placed it on his plate. Murāri’s chaste wife knew that he was a *mahā-bhāgavata*, so she cautioned him merely by chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa. Whatever Murāri offered, the Lord ate. The Lord never disregarded Murāri’s request. Whenever devotees eagerly serve the Lord, the Lord, being controlled by service, accepts that.

Early the next morning the Lord went to Murāri Gupta’s house to meet him. Mahāprabhu arrived as Murāri Gupta was sitting there enjoying the ecstasy of Kṛṣṇa’s names. Upon seeing the Lord, Murāri offered his obeisances. Murāri then respectfully offered the Lord a place to sit, and the son of Jagannātha Miśra sat down. Murāri Gupta asked, “O Lord, what brings You here?” The Lord replied, “I came for treatment.” Murāri Gupta then said, “What is the cause of Your indigestion? What foods did You eat yesterday?” The Lord said, “My dear friend, how will you know? You threw rice on the floor and said, ‘Eat! Eat!’ You forgot, but



your wife knows everything. You offered it to Me, so how could I refuse to eat? What is the use of your treatments and remedies? I got indigestion by eating your rice. Drinking water relieves indigestion. My indigestion was caused by eating your rice, so the cure is drinking your water.” After speaking in this way, the Lord, fully absorbed in the mellows of devotional service, picked up Murāri's waterpot and drank from it.

Seeing the Lord's unprecedented display of mercy, Murāri fell unconscious. His entire family then cried in ecstatic love of God. The mercy received by Murāri Gupta's servants could not even be seen by the Bhaṭṭācāryas of Navadvīpa. Even the learned brāhmaṇas of Navadvīpa were not eligible to receive the good fortune received by the servants in Murāri Gupta's house. Such so-called qualified persons did not have the good fortune to even see the mercy received by the servants in Murāri's house.

*hena prabhu, hena bhakti-yoga, hena dāsa
caitanya-prasāde haila bhaktira prakāśa*

“How glorious is the Lord, how glorious is His devotional service, and how glorious are His servants! Such devotional service was manifested by the mercy of Lord Caitanya.”

MAHAPRABHU DEPOSITS PREMA FOR NAROTTAM DAS THAKUR

*by His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri
Goswami Thakur
an excerpt from The Associates of Caitanya*

According to the *Premavilāsa*, when Mahaprabhu passed through Kānāir Nātaśālā, as He was dancing ecstatically in kirtan, He began to call out the name Narottama. When Nityananda asked Him why He was calling out this name, Mahaprabhu answered, "My Lord, You do not know Your own glories. When we

went to Jagannath Puri, You shed tears out of divine love, day after day. I managed to capture Your divine love and save it. Now I wish to keep it here by the Padmavati River for Narottama Das."

Mahaprabhu then went on to the Padmavati River to the place known as Kutubpur, where He bathed and sang and danced in ecstasy. He then called out to the river, "O Padmavati! Take My love and keep it here. When Narottama comes and bathes here, give it to him."

Then Padmavati inquired, "How will I recognize him?"

Mahaprabhu answered, "You will know it is Narottama, for when he enters your waters, you will overflow."

The place where Mahaprabhu placed prema for Narottam Das was later given the name Prematali. When Narottama was twelve years old, he had a dream in which Nityananda Prabhu told him to bathe in the Padmavati and take the prema which had been stored there for him. He went the next day to the Padmā and as soon as he put his foot in the water, the river started to overflow. The Padmavati then remembered Mahaprabhu's words and gave Narottama the prema which she had been safeguarding for him.



GIRIRAJ GOVARDHAN: THE BEST OF THE LORD'S SERVANTS

by Sri Jiva Gosvami

Sri Gopal Campu, First Campu, Prathanam
Puranama, Text 77

With many charming jewel boulders, the mountain named Govardhana offers a sitting place for Lord Krsna. With the cooing of many birds Govardhana offers Lord Krsna a welcome. With its swiftly flowing streams filled with lotus flowers, durva grass, and syamaka seeds, Govardhana offers padya. With limitless new shoots of darbha grass growing deer-hoofprint puddles, Govardhana offers arghya. With ponds where jati, lavanga and kakkola grow on the shores Govardhana offers acamaniya. With fresh, fresh, fresh, yoghurt, ghee, and honey Govardhana offers madhuparka. With water from a clear spring at its summit Govardhana offers bathing water. With golden tree bark, fine like silk, Govardhana offers garments. With fragrant powders, sandal paste, and red and white minerals Govardhana offers fragrant ointment. With blooms of malati vines and other vines Govardhana offers pleasing flowers. With the dust raised by the surabhi cows' hooves Govardhana offers incense. With the glistening of its many jewels Govardhana offers a glittering lamp even in the daytime. With charming gunja, peacock feathers, clusters of flowers, and many other pleasing objects, Govardhana offers ornaments. With pleasing fruits and roots Govardhana offers delicious meals. With cool flower-scented water mixed with fragrant and pure tulasi leaves Govardhana offers water to rinse the mouth. With campaka flowers and other glorious blooming flowers moving in the gentle breeze Govardhana offers arati. With budding nakula flowers and other trees Govardhana offers a graceful parasol. With blooming branches moving in the breezes from the Malaya Hills, Govardhana offers the service of fanning Lord Krsna. With the dancing of the

cooing peacocks Govardhana offers a festival of dancing.



When, attracted by Krsna's flute music carried by the breeze, a gopi comes, Govardhana prepares a soft couch of flowers. With the cuckoos' cooing Govardhana makes sweet singing. Gazing at Lord Krsna and performing these services to please Him, Govardhana Hill confirms his reputation as the best of the Lord's servants.

GLORIES OF SRILA RASIKANANDA DAS GOSWAMI

by His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri
Goswami Thakur;

an excerpt from *The Associates of Caitanya*

One day, Srila Rasikanada Goswami, who was also known as Rasika Murari, was meditating in a solitary place, anxious to find a spiritual master who could give him sufficient spiritual direction. When he had entered into a very deep meditation when he heard a disembodied voice say, "Murari, you need be anxious no longer. Your guru is Shyamananda and you will meet him very shortly. Take shelter of him and your life will be successful."



Upon hearing this divine message, Murari began chanting the name of Shyamananda on his beads with joyful enthusiasm. He spent the entire night crying out of his desire to meet his guru, until finally at the end of the night, he had a dream vision of Shyamananda Prabhu who said to him, "Don't worry any longer, for you will meet me this very day."

At dawn, Rasika Murari was on the lookout for his guru when he saw the tall figure of Shyamananda as effulgent as the sun, approaching him. Surrounded by his disciples like Kīśora Das, he was dancing in a state of divine love while chanting the names of Nityananda and Chaitanya. Having waited anxiously for so long to be united with his guru, Rasika Murari immediately fell down at his feet. Śyāmānada affectionately lifted him up and embraced him. Then, after giving him the Radha-Krishna mantra, he offered him up to Chaitanya and Nityananda Prabhus. This whole story reveals how one can find one's guru through sincere prayers.

Rasikānanda Deva Goswami served his guru, fully committing himself in body, mind and soul. He was so dedicated that in a short time he was recognized as Shyamananda's chief disciple. He became a very powerful preacher and an initiating guru. It is said that a good disciple becomes a good teacher. Here this is proven. A spiritual master may have innumerable disciples who call him their guru, but they are disciples only in name. Only a true disciple who has dedicated himself completely to his spiritual master is imbued with all the powers of the guru. With the spiritual powers invested in him by his guru, Rasikānanda was able to convert many criminals, atheists, Muslims, and other fallen spirit souls to the path of devotion, bestowing the jewel of prema upon them all.



THIS MONTH: VAISNAVA FESTIVALS AND SATSANG WITH BODHAYAN SWAMI

October 2016	Vaisnava festivals
5 October	Appearance Day of Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur
11 October	Appearance Day of Srila Madhvacarya
12 October	Pasankusa Ekadasi
13 October	Disappearance Day of Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami Disappearance Day of Srila Raghunatha Bhatta Goswami Disappearance Day of Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami
16 October	Disappearance Day of Srila Murari Gupta
17 October	Commencement of Karthik Masa (Damodar)
20 October	Disappearance Day of Srila Narottam Das Thakur
26 October	Rama Ekadasi
31 October	Sri Govardhan Puja
31 October	Appearance Day of Srila Rasikananda Dev Goswami

October 2016	Satsang Location	Contact
Up to 5 October	Puri, India	Sripad Gopal Das Brahmachari e-mail: iamaryan108@gmail.com phone: +91 9800243268
6 - 12 October	Yatra to Gaya, India	Sripad Yagneshwar Das e-mail: yagneshwardas@gmail.com phone: +91 9035573809
13 – 25 October	Vraja Mandal Parikrama, Vrindavan, India	Sripad Yagneshwar Das e-mail: yagneshwardas@gmail.com phone: +91 9035573809
26 October – November	Mayapur, India	Sripad Pradyumna Das Pradyumna208@gmail.com or bodhayanswami@gmail.com +919851404915, +919800623301

Bhagavata Dharma

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Dedicated to:

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakur, Founder Acharya of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math, and
His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanata Saraswati Goswami Thakur PRABHUPADA.

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