

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS
Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



HARE KRISHNA NEWS

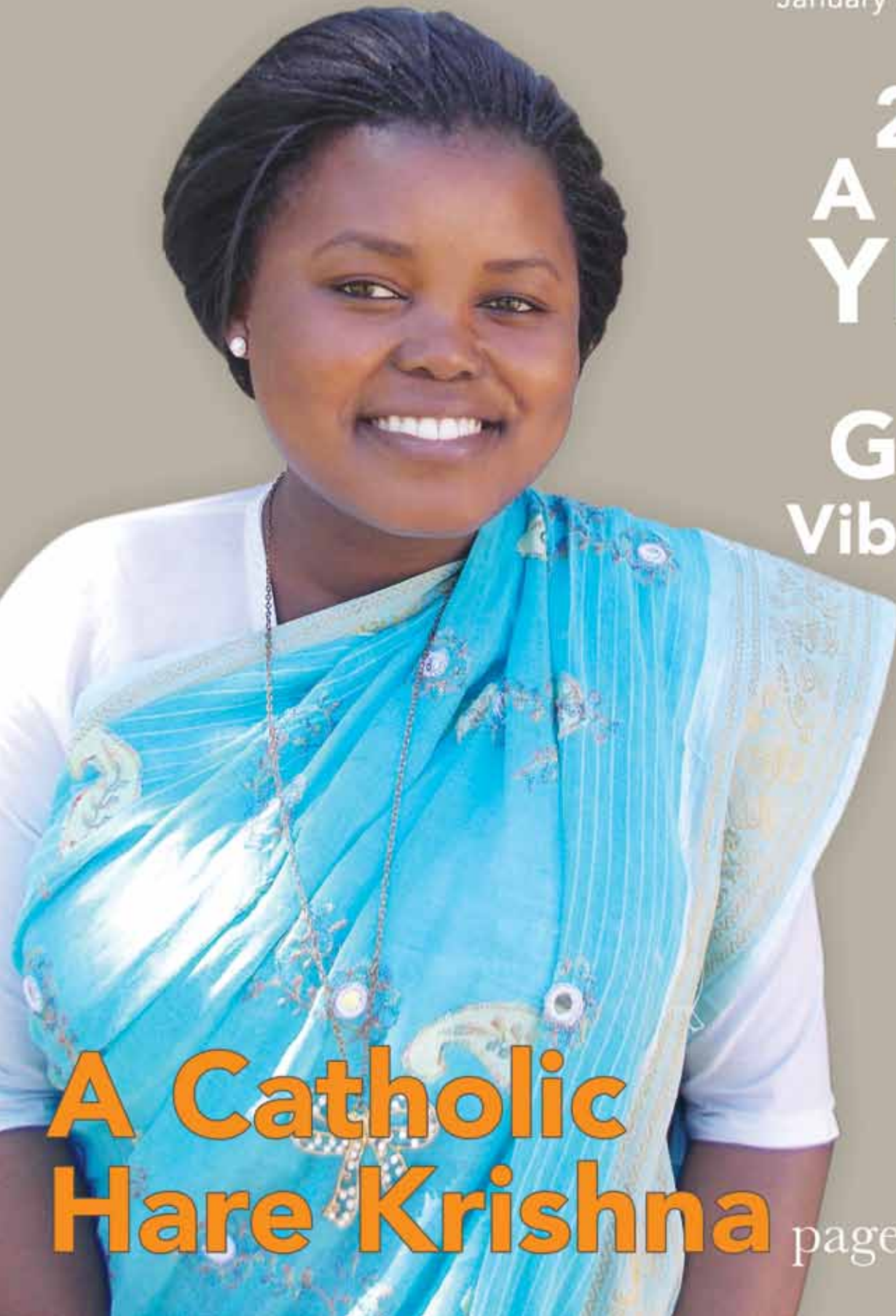
January / February 2015

**2015 -
A Good
YEAR**

page 4

**GOOD
Vibrations**
page 9

**A Catholic
Hare Krishna** page 7



In this Issue

Srila Prabhupada Speaks

Cure for Dis-ease

3

SSRRT Connect

Meet the Team

3

Message from the President

2015 - A Good Year

4

Myth Buster

Hare Krishna or Hindu?

6

Youth Column

A Catholic Hare Krishna

7

Temple Focus

Soul Tour

8

Good Vibrations

9

Soul Stories

Faith Speaks

10

The Vedic Chef

Ghee

11

Go Green

Spiritual Sustainability

12

The Vedic View

Soul Charger

13

For the Kids

Learners Timetable

14

Family Matters

Perspective and Prayer

15

Event Guide

16

Temple Directory

Temple President's Office - Ananta Gauranga 082 783 3599

Communications - Krsangi Radhe 083 254 8339

Facilities Manager - Akrura 072 463 8119

Festival Manager - Balaram 082 881 4521

Finance - Ramvijay 084 550 4101

Operations Manager - Pyari Mohan 083 602 6008

Youth Officer - Sudhir 079 144 0003

General Queries

Call the Temple on 031 403 3328 (o/h) 9am - 5pm

Contact the Temple directly for the following departments:

Govinda's (direct line 031 403 4600)

Gift Counter, Book Table Queries, Back to Godhead Queries

Take Care of Krishna - Kamala Sundari (Tues - Fri 9.30am - 1pm)

Devotee Breakfast/Lunch Sponsorships - Rasalika 031 403 4600

Departments

University Programmes/Girls Programme -

Rukmini 084 579 1080

Street Chanting Virabhadra 071 870 0588

House Programmes - Radha Giridhari 076 190 8485/

Shyam Ghat 0793829410/Patita Pavan Nitai 078 455 7594

Funerals - Ananta Ses 084 686 2618

Weekend Boys Programme/Smart Box Queries -

Ananta Gauranga 082 783 3599

Guest Accommodation - Param 084 522 8936

Deity Department - Deva Deva 076 178 6850

rPralambhari 072 800 8329

Outreach Programmes - Alanath 083 775 2760

Book Distribution - Krishna Caitanya 081 088 2493

To receive SMS, whatsapp or email notifications and updates,
subscribe to temple@iskcondurban.net

Child Protection Office

www.childprotectionoffice.org | urbancpt@gmail.com | 076 719 6461

Ed's Note

I love what I do. I am one of the blessed few. However, returning to work on January 5th meant 'hitting the floor running' to get our latest copy of Hare Krishna News to you. I remember Jayadvaita Swami's recent declaration that editors are like diamond cutters, so I feel encouraged. We all need encouragement and when we get it from above, it is empowering.

This is what Hare Krishna News is all about. It is encouragement on a soul level, helping us connect with God. Everyday news bombards us with horror crashes, violent crime, political turmoil, family drama, celebs, fashion, etc. It fills us with fear and desire. Hare Krishna News is about hope and fulfilment; and this year we hit the 'refresh' button to cater to a broader audience.

The temple turns thirty in October 2015 and in each issue Hare Krishna News will feature activities we have maintained over these thirty years. In this issue we share a shy girl's first encounter with street chanting, and how the sweet serenity of the temple inspired a young lady to become a temple tour guide. Also new additions are: a Temple Directory, SSRRT Connect, your new information highway and Myth Buster. Often people misidentify Hare Krishna as Hindu and our Myth Buster sets the record straight.

Ever heard about a Catholic Hare Krishna? Turn to page 7. Our storyteller shares the plight of a little boy from Pinetown and his faith in the Lion Lord. Learners can cut out the school timetable designed especially for them.

Our Temple President lets us in on his 2015 plan. Also, get event and holy day details in the new cut-out Event Guide.

I trust you will enjoy the refreshed Hare Krishna News.

Warmest wishes

Rasa-sthali Dasi

PS. I would love to hear from you.

Write to me at rasasthali@iskcondurban.net

On the Cover

Shiella Msthal at the Temple.

Quoted verse translations and excerpts from purports to Bhagavad-gita, Srimad Bhagavatam, and pictures on pages 14 and 16 are © The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International, Inc. www.Krishna.com. Used with permission.

Cure for Dis-ease

Srila Prabhupada Speaks

Hospitals, there are many, but real hospitals . . . to cure the material disease, there is no hospital. There are hundreds and thousands of hospitals for curing the disease of the body, but there is no hospital to cure the disease of the soul. That is the defect. So we are opening hospitals for curing the disease of the soul. They have no information about the soul throughout the whole world. Even so-called religious organizations, they have no information about the soul. They go to religious ceremonies for material profit. They do not know

what is the necessity of the soul and what is the disease of the soul. They do not know. *Nabhijanati mam ebhyah param avyayam*. What is the goal of life, these people, they do not know, *mudhas*. *Mudha* means rascals. They do not know what is the goal of life. They take calculation of the duration of life, that fifty, sixty, or hundred years. That's all. Beyond this, after this, they do not know. Yes. That is the defect. Now, in the *Bhagavad-gita* it is said that this temporary attempt to become happy—*anta-vanta phalam tesam*—it will end with the end of the body. But they do not know beyond this. Therefore *alpa-medhasam*, they are less intelligent. Just like a child playing. He likes to play and does not go to school. So do you think that is all right?

—From a morning walk on Observatory Golf Course in Johannesburg. 12 October, 1975



SRILA PRABHUPADA'S VISIT TO SA

This is our logo celebrating the 40th anniversary of Srila Prabhupada's visit to South Africa.

Meet the Team

SSRRT Connect

By Krishangi Radhe Dasi

Welcome to SSRRT connect. You may ask, "What is SSRRT Connect?" It is Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple's (SSRRT) platform for sharing official and not so common information.

Vibhu Caitanya Das, our Temple President formed a new management team in July 2014. I was requested to serve as the Communications and Public Relations Officer.

Many may know Vibhu Caitanya for his mild mannerisms and happy disposition. You can read about his vision and plan for 2015 on pages 4 and 5.

Akrura Das, is not only our Facilities Manager but also heads the temple restoration project. He is committed to meeting the October 2015 deadline.

Balaram Das is fondly known as 'Festival Balaram'. He has been our festival manager for over two decades. He is our Festival and Outreach Manager.



Ramvijay Das has been our Finance and Governance Manager since 2009. Under his ethical and savvy leadership, the temple accounts have been well managed and successfully audited.

Pyari Mohan Das is the temple's Operations Manager. He works in the background ensuring the smooth flow of programme operations at the temple.

Sudhir Chandanram is the Youth Development Manager. Under his leadership, youth are invited every Friday for chanting in the temple at 7pm. This significantly increased our youth group.

The Communications Department has a busy year planned. It is our aim to make you feel that the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple is an extension of your home, and your home an extension of the temple. We look forward to engaging with you in service and communication. Please write to me communications@iskcondurban.net

2015 - A Good Year

Message from the President

My grandfather is an intelligent man. In 1975 when he heard of Srila Prabhupada visiting Pretoria, he knew it was important to meet him; only having heard that Srila Prabhupada was a devotee of Krishna and was on a mission to spread the chanting of Hare Krishna. My grandparents had the privilege of touching His Divine Grace's feet as they understood that according to the Vedic tradition this was the way to accumulate extraordinary blessings. My grandfather loves to narrate this story to my friends, and he jokes that it was through that blessing that I received the opportunity to become a Krishna devotee and great-grand disciple of Srila Prabhupada.

2015 marks the 40th anniversary of Srila Prabhupada's visit to South Africa. We may not be able to hear nor see Srila Prabhupada nor even touch his feet but we will commemorate his visit by hosting programmes at the same venues he visited – now places of pilgrimage. You can look forward to our guest speakers sharing their personal interactions with

*...freshly painted
towers shimmer in
the morning sun.*

Srila Prabhupada. It is heartening to hear from those well wishers and about the service they rendered to His Divine Grace.

We also celebrate Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple's 30th anniversary this year. Many devotees have poured their hearts into building this masterpiece. Hand-made wooden carvings, precision fitted marble tiling and glass windows inlaid with gold dust bear testimony to the love the devotees had for the Supreme Lord. Every inch of this temple exemplifies this lesson. What Krishna wants is our love.

Living in the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple for almost a decade helps me appreciate the devotees who united to build this temple and those who have maintained it for the last thirty years with ever-increasing

standards of devotion. They are worshipable to me. In 2015 we honour those devotees with deep gratitude. They have a wealth of knowledge to share with the next generation and we can learn from them how to expand the glory of our temple for the next hundred years and beyond.

In October 1985 you could have smelt the fresh oakwood, or seen your reflection on the imported Portuguese marble floor. We want to restore that original glory of our temple. It's a colossal task. Restorations have already begun and you can see the freshly painted towers shimmer in the morning sun.

Lastly, I am sharing with you our 2015 goals in the graphic on the next page. I turn to you to see our goals through and know that your participation ensures success. If you have ideas of how we can enhance these goals, please write to us at temple@iskcondurban.net.

Thank you.

Your servant,

Vibhu Caitanya Das

We are happy to unveil our temple anniversary logo. Please post on your social media accounts and like, share, and spread the word that this is going to be a spectacular year of celebration.



Goals — Fifteen for 2015

Temple



Deities

- Increase the Deity worship standard
- Use organic products and Ahimsa milk (from cows that are not slaughtered after they stop producing milk)
- Set up a trust fund to ensure the Deity worship continues uninterrupted.



Govinda's Restaurant

- Improve the quality of service and food.
 - Increase our sales by 25%.
- The restaurant helps maintain the Temple.



Go Green

- Aim to become the first "green" temple in Africa.
- Research new avenues to save Krishna's energy, especially to reduce water and electricity usage.



Funds

- Further develop an internal audit and risk system.
- Report accounting timeously.



Temple Construction

- Finalise master plan for the temple, which includes the hall, conference facility and new restaurant.
- Begin construction.

Devotees



Priests

- Train our priests in Deity worship.
- Inspired priests automatically enhance festivals.



Devotee Care

- Serve the devotees.
- Create a culture of spiritual care.



Connect with Youth

- Inspire them to become more actively involved.
- Encourage youth to take more responsibility for succession planning.



Workshops & Skills Training

- Equip devotees with: Seminars Skills training Study of scripture



Internal Communication

- Establish a communication channel for the devotee community.

Community




Awareness

- Make "Hare Krishna" a household name to approximately 2.5% of the eThekweni Municipality population (over 3.5 million people)
- Through: Branding Advertising Festivals Invitations



Social Media

- Increase Facebook likes 
- Activate an Instagram account.
- Strengthen presence in social media and internet searches.



Increase Book Distribution

- More Smart Boxes (self service stations)
- Hospital programme: place *Bhagavad-gita* in all hospitals in KZN.
- Work towards becoming the top book distributors in Africa.
- Individuals to distribute 9 books a month = 108 books in the year.



University Programmes

- Expose students to the science of *bhakti-yoga* by:
 - Regular meetings on campus, temple visits weekend stay overs, and retreats,
 - Establish a residence/training facility for young men who are serious about spiritual life.



Donor Relationships

- We want to reciprocate with everyone who contributes in cash or kind by using the latest software to develop a donor relationship system.



30th Anniversary Goal

- All devotees and well wishers to come together to help realise these goals as an offering to Sri Sri Sri Radha Radhanath

Hare Krishna or Hindu?

Myth Buster

Ananta Gauranga Das

Saras Govender wears a red Banares sari with a gold border. Her hair is parted as if by Moses himself, in perfect symmetry and filled with red sindhur. A matching red dot monopolised most of the space on her forehead which reminds me of an emergency button at a nuclear power plant. She elegantly saunters into our Sunday Love Feast with her two daughters. I ponder what does it mean to be Hindu? If anyone knows, it's got to be her, I thought. As I approach Mrs. Govender, I notice her eyes snapping through gold-rim glasses and I bravely put forth my enquiry, "What does it mean to be Hindu?" "Hindus are associated with a polytheistic form of worship (adoration of numerous demigods) and/or an emphasis on God as an impersonal, all-pervasive energy, void of form or personality," she answers. She explains that for many years she prayed to various demigods for material benedictions but after she read *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*, her life and paradigm transformed. It became clear to her the difference between the demigods and the Supreme Lord. She refers to Srila Prabhupada's explanation that the demigods can be likened to government ministers. "They can give you material wealth in relation to your *karmic account*," she continues to explain, "however, Krishna is the King," Yes, I think. Krishna, by His sweet will can give you anything and everything and His dear devotees, the demigods, are empowered by Him. Krishna also permits them to manage universal affairs.

Hare Krishnas are misidentified as a Hindu group. If something waddles like a duck and quacks like a duck most likely it is a duck, right? Well, sometimes looks can be deceptive. Take for instance the duck billed platypus, it has many characteristics of a duck but is in fact a semi-aquatic egg-laying mammal. Similarly, external commonalities exist with Hinduism (attire, Deity worship and roots in the East), but when we explore the crux of the Hare Krishna movement, subtle and gross variance becomes evident. Saras, explains the origins of Hinduism, "In *Science of Self Realisation*, Prabhupada points out that the word Hindu is actually a misnomer, categorising individuals inhabiting land near

the Indus River. It has thus become an umbrella term for various orthodox traditions of India, Vaishnavism, Shaktism, and Shaivism, among others." The Hare Krishna Movement is in the Vaishnavism category, which is not viewed as a sectarian religion but rather as *sanatana dharma* (the eternal occupation of the soul).

Krishna consciousness is centred on *bhakti-yoga*—every living entity has a body, mind, and consciousness (which emanates from the soul). The epitome of yoga

If something waddles like a duck and quacks like a duck most likely it is a duck, right?

is to create unity between these three afore-mentioned factors and God, through the medium of mantra meditation (sacred sound vibration). The mantra for this age is the *maha-mantra*: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. This meditative process does not make the practitioner one with God, rather he develops godly qualities, culminating in the revival of his

lost identity and relationship with God. Thus he has access to incredible spiritual vigour and awakens his dormant love for the Supreme. Sound vibration is the basis of Vedic philosophy. This notion is common to many creeds of the world, for example, the Holy Bible says that in the beginning was the Word and it is the Word that will see us through...all the way to love of God (John 1.1).

A shaven head or robes of a monk are not procurers to this path; our approach (mantra meditation) is *atma krandanam*, or the crying of the soul, yearning to connect with the Supreme Father. Krishna consciousness is not false imposition but the soul's natural disposition. My conversation with Saras culminated in a shared realisation. We Hare Krishnas don't care if you are Hindu, Christian or Zoroastrian, black, white or brown; we don't care if you are rich or destitute. In the eyes of God we are His undying parts and parcels, part of one spiritual family. Native

American wisdom typifies this sentiment: a dog can recognise his master whether dressed in suit and tie, jeans or in a night gown. If we cannot recognise God, our Supreme Master, the same Lord within all faiths, then our consciousness is less than that of an animal. What is the test of one's religion? The degree to which you learn to love God. This is Hare Krishna.



A Catholic Hare Krishna

Youth Column

By Shiella Mtshali

Yes, I am a Catholic Hare Krishna. And this is my story. I was born and raised in a Catholic home and I always had unanswered questions. I believe that the day I met the devotees my search for spiritual fulfilment and discovering my true self began. It has not been an easy journey and I haven't discovered my true self yet. Ever since I found *bhakti-yoga* (yoga of devotion to God) I started doing what people call 'weird' and what is often seen as 'cheating Jesus Christ' and I face many judgments.

It all started with my friend, Nomzamo and I walking round Howard College campus (UKZN) trying to find our feet during orientation. Rukmini and Fortune in Bhakti Yoga Society (BYS) T-shirts caught our eye. They were friendly and convincing and we were in the mood of "just one of the new things to try out at university," so we signed up. At my first session they started with chanting a mantra I had never heard before. At first I was lost and confused because it was foreign to me. The mantra was a simple rhyme of three words in poetic repetition. The *maha-mantra*, as I later learnt it was called, was printed on a large banner. It became easy to follow and the clapping and swaying made the chanting fun. That day, when I got the *maha-mantra* and my first chanting beads I knew I was in for a life changing experience.

I have been practicing *bhakti-yoga* for a year now and have loved every moment of it. Last September I attended the student retreat at the temple in Chatsworth. In the company of other students and devotees I made the choice to chant regularly and practice the *bhakti-yoga* lifestyle as much as I can. However, I still find some of the traditions confusing. Being raised Catholic, I've been taught to not worship sculptures of God or demigods. There are other aspects that are appealing and which I would like to learn more about, like discouraging the slaughter of animals. My current practices include chanting, joining Food for Life events and ofcourse, BYS on campus.

In November, I returned home for the holidays and decided to confess to my mother. She is a single parent to four children, of which I am the oldest. She is a devout Catholic and telling her about my new found spiritual pursuit was not a simple thing. In my family even

traditional African ceremonies were not observed. I thought long and hard how to present it to her. When I sat her down and told her everything; how it would affect my previous practices, how this would reflect on her, the whole family and family religious practices, she was understanding. Shocking! But she respects and supports my decisions as long as they make me happy.

Naturally, my mother had many questions like any other concerned parent would. She is a smart woman and in no way would let her daughter follow something without any investigation of her own. So I was prepared. Coming from a family of book worms, my mum and sister hijacked all the *bhakti-yoga* books

I brought from campus and enjoyed them. The questions came pouring in. I have to admit that was not easy and I could only answer some of them.

I am looking forward to returning to campus and BYS this year. My long term plan is to qualify as a criminal psychologist and help people in correctional facilities to go back to their communities and societies as better people. I pray and trust that Krishna will help me guide them to Him also. I will continue chanting, sustain my friendships with devotees, and my passion for Food For Life and book distribution. I want to balance my profession with serving Krishna and hope that I can also play my part in ensuring that Krishna consciousness blossoms forever.

Shiella Mtshali is twenty-three years old and from Vryheid. She already has a qualification in architecture, specialising in landscape architecture. She is now a second year psychology student at UKZN (Howard College).

*"just one
of the new
things to
try out at
university"*



BYS (Bhakti Yoga Society) students visit to the temple in September. From Left to right: Phiwokuhe Mehlobo, Shiella Mtshali, Saviour Machuwairer, and Mduduzi Mbatha.

Soul Tour

Temple Focus

Sharadiya Rasa Dasi

I invite you to my sanctuary. When was the last time you felt peaceful on a soul level? Serenity washing over you? We all need that feeling more often than we think. My first experience came in 1985. The Temple had just opened and after days of celebration, when the crowds died down and you could find parking, I ventured to the Temple. Upon entering the Temple, I removed my shoes in honour of the sacred ground I was about to tread. I didn't imagine that it would become my soul place. Not only because it is the home of my Lord, but the pleasant scents, cool marble floor and subtle ambience relaxes the body and calms the mind.

As I looked up at the ceiling, a devotee clad in a simple cotton sari approached me and offered a guided tour. She explained the sacred architecture, basic thought and history. I was fascinated. She unexpectedly gave me a tape recording of Yamuna Devi singing the *Brahma Samhita* prayers. Now damaged by overuse and replaced in CD format, it remains my favourite. Since that day I have been coming at least once a week and over years I gradually became more serious in my spiritual pursuits. To honour my first experience I decided to become a Temple tour guide four years ago.

I meet all kinds of people. I love finding out what they feel and it is no surprise that they comment

on the peace and serenity. The Temple boasts of having at least one tour every day since it's opening. Tours can be a lone visitor captivated by the view of the towers from Higginson Highway or booked groups of up to two hundred people. You don't have to know Krishna to come and enjoy the temple atmosphere. It is like the taste of sugar...it is always sweet irrespective of who you are and where you come from. We've had some famous visitors, most notably our beloved late ex-President Dr. Nelson Mandela. People of different faiths continuously come for a tour of the temple. We have enjoyed the company of Mormons, Jews, Buddhists, Christians,

Muslims, Hindus, etc. I have to say that from speaking to these people I have come to understand that real religion does not separate, rather it brings people together with God as the unifying thread.

The temple is often featured in eThekweni tourist brochures and was once an icon for Chatsworth. In the early 90s we were included in the Mile Scapes Tour (T2). We also received a four and a half star rating from www.tripadvisor.co.za. Based

on their reviews and traffic monitoring, we received the 2013 Tourist Landmark Award from the Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Our tours are free. You can take as many photographs as you like. For an individual or group tour contact us on 031-4033328 or temple@iskcondurban.net

I will be your tour guide if you come in on a Monday morning, and I cannot think of a better way to start the week.

...the pleasant scents, cool marble floor and subtle ambience relaxes the body and calms the mind.



A tour group gaze at the Temple ceiling.

Good Vibrations

Temple Focus

By Carmin Naidoo

Sound and music fascinate me; that a song can bring all people together. Music is sound waves following a time pattern. It's perplexing how something so simple has such a great effect on our mood, on our frame of mind, and on our thought processes.

Music has the ability to console us through our toughest of times. I love sound for its ability to heal. But I have never loved it more than I do now, now that I have heard the chanting of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*.

The Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* is a spiritual sound vibration. Srila Prabhupada explained that potent sound, like the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*, can penetrate the stratosphere and enter the spiritual realm. The holy name also penetrates our own "stratospheres", our bodies, and enters our spirit. It sings to our soul and goes far beyond what the music of this world can do. It clears the dust covering the truth, that we are more than our bodies, and we are not meant to just strive for worldly things. It offers the real salve to our problems and gives us the ability to solve them on our own. The *maha-mantra* not only brings out the best in us, it brings out the love in us.

I have heard several descriptions of the glory of chanting the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*, descriptions that may even make you tear a little. But, due to the complexities of this world, we say "seeing is believing". And seeing is believing on *harinam sankirtan*. *Harinam sankirtan* is a group of devotees chanting Hare Krishna on the streets or any public place.

I remember chanting and dancing along the sidewalks for the first time. Of course, I worried about what people would think of me, but as I looked around, all I saw were the devotees chanting and dancing — as simple as that. The atmosphere and mood however, said something else. It didn't feel simple. I began to feel more like I was surrounded by superheroes

who were busy saving the planet and who, by my observation, were definitely succeeding. I felt protected and shielded from the insecurities and dangers of the world. The devotees wore the *maha-mantra* like capes, they wielded the *maha-mantra* as their weapon. Our super heroes were rescuing people by reminding them of their spiritual nature, their eternal nature as pure lovers of God.

The maha-mantra not only brings out the best in us, it brings out the love in us.

Even now when I go out on *harinam sankirtan*, I'm reminded of the power of sound and music. Astonished bystanders flash their million dollar smiles, some clap and dance and try to chant along with us. There are those who stare with gratitude for the joy this holy sound brings to their hearts. By joining the *harinam* party I see how chanting unites all people. The effect is endless, it creates silent bonds, and reminds us of our divine

relationship with God. It helps us find ourselves in a world where we so easily get lost. This is the real power of sound.



Devotees chanting and dancing on the Beachfront.

The Hare Krishna devotees have been going out on *harinam sankirtan* since before the official opening of the temple, in 1985. They continue with much enthusiasm and dedication. You can come across the devotees chanting and dancing on streets, markets, residential areas, on the beach, etc. Recently, a few devotees started chanting just outside the temple on the path to the train station. Thousands of workers get to hear the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*. We warmly welcome you to join us every Saturday morning for street chanting in Durban Central and occasionally, on the beach front.

Faith Speaks

Soul Stories

By Nikunja Vilasini Dasi

We have faith in so many things. We believe that we will reach our destination safely everyday even though we hear of horrendous car accidents. We know that our airplane will land safely although we've read of missing aircrafts that have made news headlines. We believe that we will live long healthy lives although we know of many people who are dying of cancer or AIDS. We trust in people who may hurt or deceive us, and we believe in our abilities when we are aware of our defects. We believe in government leaders, in rock stars, in justice, peace, and love. Sometimes we believe that God is not in the equation of our lives. Somehow our belief in the fallible has blinded our faith in the infallible. As our eternal well-wisher, God is always to be trusted. Just as a parent is excited when his child starts speaking his language, God is overjoyed when we begin to speak His language, the language of faith.

I know of an eight-year-old boy who cannot speak, but knows God's language. Madhava was born with an undiagnosed disorder where he cannot speak or use his hands to write. All his growth milestones have been delayed including walking, emotive expression, and doing things for himself. He has weak muscle tone and motor skills and has difficulty in expressing his emotions. Yet his brain is alive and bright. He communicates through his own sign language and is adept in using technological tools like the computer and iPod to learn and read like any other child. However, his impairment did pose difficulties. Although he had learnt to express his needs

*Somehow
our belief
in the
fallible has
blinded
our faith
in the
infallible.*

and wants through crying or gestures, he was unable to express his finer feelings. When he discovered the "feelings" icon in his iPod program meant to communicate his feelings to others, he chose the face and word "frustrated." So I could imagine how much more difficult it was for him when he was younger.

When he was only three years old, Madhava visited the holy land of Mayapur in India and was awed by the Nrsimhadeva deity at the Hare Krishna Temple there and learnt to imitate the deity's expression. Lord Nrsimhadeva, the half-man half-lion incarnation of God, appeared thousands of years ago to give shelter to His devotee, Prahlada. Prahlada's father, Hiranyakashipu, was an evil king who caused havoc in

the world. His greed for wealth and power induced him to commit heinous acts, and made him believe that he was the Lord of the universe. Yet his son, Prahlada, was born a devotee of God. He would chant Lord Vishnu's holy names and speak about His glories even to his classmates. When his father heard about this, he was infuriated. Lord Vishnu was his sworn enemy whom had killed his brother, a similar tyrant. Hiranyakashipu warned five-year-old Prahlada to rather learn the worldly topics taught in school. When Prahlada did not heed his warning and continued to speak about taking shelter of Lord Vishnu, an enraged Hiranyakashipu summoned his men to kill his son. They struck him with their sharp tridents and other weapons but to no avail. They threw him beneath the feet of elephants and into a pit of poisonous snakes but no harm came to him. They hurled him from the top of a hill; conjured illusory tricks; administered poison; starved him; exposed him to severe cold, winds, fire, and water; threw heavy stones to crush him, but Prahlada remained unaffected. His unwavering faith in God while he incessantly chanted God's names protected him from the greatest danger.

Hiranyakashipu was perplexed and morose. He thought that Prahlada had become immortal and was afraid that his child would be the cause of his destruction. Prahlada's teachers assured the king that they would indoctrinate Prahlada with the principles of materialistic life and train him as the king wished. But when this failed, he summoned Prahlada, planning to kill him. Again Prahlada started speaking about the potency of love for God. Hiranyakashipu seethed with pride and anger. He claimed to be greater than God, but Prahlada challenged him declaring that the Lord is all-pervading, that everything is under His control, and that no one is equal to or greater than Him.



Madhava and his Nrsimhadeva doll.

Hiranyakashipu challenged Prahlada that if God were so great did He exist within the columns of the palace. When Prahlada responded that Lord Vishnu resides everywhere, his irate father struck the pillar with his fist. From the column emerged a fearsome form of Lord Nrsimhadeva with an illustrious mane, dagger-like teeth and a tumultuous roar, ready to punish the tormentor of His devotee. To protect His devotee, the Lord was prepared to do anything. A vicious fight ensued resulting in Hiranyakashipu dying at the hands of the Lord.

When Madhava would hear this story from his mother and cuddle with his Nrsimhadeva doll at night, he would be consoled from all fear. When Madhava would see an airplane in the sky he would point at it and gesture to his mother that he wanted to go back to Mayapur and see Lord Nrsimhadeva again. As time progressed, his mother, Dwijamani, noticed that he taught lessons in faith to everyone around him.

On one overcast day, Madhava visited his speech therapist, who is helping him to learn sounds and express himself more through his IPod. The darkness of the room made Madhava confused and frightened. He opened his eyes wide, curled up his lips into a snarl, and bent his hands forward with arched fingers. His therapist was startled and asked his mum what he was doing. Dwijamani explained that whenever Madhava felt afraid or lost, he would pose as Lord Nrsimhadeva, the half-man half-lion incarnation of God. To the young speech therapist, these were foreign words and concepts of God. So Dwijamani related the story to her. After listening to the intriguing story, she was encouraged and enthusiastic to read that story to Madhava at his speech therapy sessions. She understood that Madhava's reaction was a result of knowing that God will protect him in every situation just as He had protected Prahlada.

Madhava's faith arises from hearing of the Lord's greatness from his parents. Dwijamani has faith that God has a plan for her and her family. Whatever challenges she has been faced with, she sees it as an impetus to take shelter of the Lord and also believes that Madhava has a special purpose, and whatever that purpose may be, his spiritual growth is not restricted to the limitations of his body.

This became apparent on a recent visit to the Hare Krishna Temple in Chatsworth when Madhava took his Nrsimhadeva doll with him. Noticing one of the columns in the temple room, he asked his mother whether Nrsimhadeva appeared from that column. When his mum nodded, implying that the temple is the Lord's residence, Madhava attempted to return Nrsimhadeva back to the pillar. His mother concluded that he wanted to send the Lord back home. I am convinced that Madhava's relationship with the Lord is becoming more real and meaningful as he continues to speak in God's language.

Ghee

The Vedic Chef



Ghee is one of the most ancient and *sattvic* (pure) foods known. Used judiciously, it is ideal for cooking as it does not burn unless heated excessively. It is used in cooking at the temple and religious ceremonies. It synergies with the food nutrients and nourishes the bodily constituents.

Ghee keeps indefinitely without refrigeration, as the elements that cause butter to spoil have been removed. Just remember to keep it covered and free from water or any other contaminants. Always dip into your ghee jar with a clean spoon.

Maintain a clean appearance and calm mind while preparing your ghee. This is one of the most healing food *sadhanas* (practice) when performed with grace. It is the *sadhana* to induce a *sattvic* mind. You can prepare ghee and bring to the temple as an offering to the Deities.

500g raw, unsalted organic butter
heavy stainless steel frying pan
1 stainless steel spoon

Sterilise the storage jar, pan, and spoon in advance by filling with (or immersing in) boiling water. Cook the butter gently over moderate heat for approximately 10 to 15 minutes. Allow the foam that surfaces during the heating process to settle on the bottom of the pan as sediment. Watch carefully to avoid burning and stir occasionally. When the ghee begins to boil silently, with only a trace of air bubbles on the surface, it is done. Allow to cool and pour ghee into a clean container, making sure that the sediment remains on the bottom of the saucepan. The sediment may be taken as a snack and can be sweetened with brown sugar.

From A Life of Balance by Maya Twari

Spiritual Sustainability

Go Green

By Gaurangi Dasi

The Vedas teach that the purpose of our existence on planet Earth is not to survive or live forever. Everyone dies. Everything ends. What matters is not the duration of our lives but the quality thereof. Our experiences simply provide opportunities to choose good over evil.

Scripture calls the times we live in Kali Yuga, the iron age of destruction and degradation. As this age advances, so do the catastrophes on Earth. And we have to contend with them.



Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple now uses biodegradable corn starch packaging.

In the midst of our planet's growing deterioration, the experts advise us to save the rhino, save water, save money, save energy, and thus save our planet. Vedic philosophy advises that this world is Maya (illusion or temporary). But this doesn't mean that we ignore these concerns. Although chanting and devotional service purify the atmosphere and our lives, the escalating price we pay for the use of electricity and the fumes we choke on is a reality and are issues we need to actively address and solve.

On closer examination, evidence indicates that climate change is creating longer and hotter summers followed by longer, colder winters. Eventually these extreme temperatures will lead to widespread failure of crops, worldwide food and water shortages, exorbitant prices, and renewed wars. This is something we are already getting a taste of. Contrary to popular belief, climate change is not an exclusively man-made problem (although humanity's careless industry over the last two centuries has certainly exacerbated it). A growing body of scientific evidence points to

several previous cycles where the earth's climate was dramatically altered by natural causes.

In the light of these findings, we may be tempted to give up on any attempt to make this world a better place and think that there is nothing we can do to prevent it from deteriorating. It is Kali Yuga after all, we may think, and disaster is to be expected. So why bother to recycle, reduce and reuse? Why conserve energy, water, and other resources? Through karma, we are repeatedly presented with increasingly greater challenges until we gain the wisdom to choose wisely. Our purpose in Kali Yuga is to usher in the foretold "Golden Age" in the midst of quarrel and hypocrisy by making proper choices.

Human beings are comprised of body, mind, and spirit. The Krishna conscious philosophy teaches the devotee how to be truly successful in all three areas - neglecting none. If we choose to live compassionately, consciously and simply, we will have an alternative to offer the world. We can light this age of darkness through awareness and the application of alternative behaviours, attitudes, and technologies. We can collectively and

intelligently teach the world by example how to conserve the beauty and balance of nature as an act of devotion to Krishna.

Temple Restoration Update

- After three months the painting of the towers were completed. The three step process of waterproofing, priming and painting using the highest quality materials guarantees to last eight years.
- The Srila Prabhupada Disciple Memorial Wall was unveiled in honour of our past heroes who played pivotal roles in ISKCON in South Africa.
- The newly polished steel peacock altar gate was reinstalled.

If you would like to assist:

Contact Kamala-sundari Dasi on 031 403 3328,
Tuesday – Friday 9:30am-13:30pm.

The Soul Charger

The Vedic View

Venu Gopal Das

"You know how your phone has a charger?" said comedian Jerry Seinfeld, "Daily meditation charges the mind and body." This ardent practitioner of mantra meditation said he would never have completed his multi-award winning show without it. Russell Brand, Ellen DeGeneres, and Clint Eastwood all share this Vedic practice. Meditation is practiced by thousands of successful people from all walks of life.

Meditation employs sound in the form of mantra. These Sanskrit mantras are names of the Lord and may be chanted in solitary or collectively. There are many different practitioners of meditation, each with different affiliations, spiritual views and techniques of chanting. Some groups use the mantras without knowing the translations and focus solely on the mechanics of chanting, whilst others, like the Hare Krishna movement, focus on both meditative chanting and the Vedic philosophy that supports it.

Since the introduction of mantra to the West in the 1960s, much research has been conducted on the numerous health benefits of chanting. Skeptics try to downplay these medical findings and have stereotyped meditation as merely an alternative or integrative healthcare. The confirmed health benefits include stress reduction, normalized blood-pressure, increased brain function and improved memory.¹ However the benefits go beyond the physiological. Practitioners give numerous accounts of how mantra meditation has contributed towards creativity, motivation, self-development and inner peace.²

Although experiments show physiological benefits of mantra meditation, science fails to explain why meditation works.³ Its self-enrichment properties are shrouded in further mystery. Despite this, mantra meditation is only increasing in popularity. Modern research neglects the crucial fact that mantra meditation has Vedic origins that clarify its potent effect.

The *Kalisantarana Upanisad* states, "...to counteract the effects of Kali, one should meditate on the names of the Lord." Lord Brahma emphasizes in the *Yajur Veda* that, "The words of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* are especially meant for counteracting the sins of Kali Yuga. One cannot find a method of

religion as sublime as the chanting of the *maha-mantra*."

ISKCON founder A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada said on numerous occasions that the physiological benefits of mantra meditation are merely by-products. The real value found in chanting, especially the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra*, is that The practitioner will break free from the superficial and



develop a profound taste for transcendence. This *maha-mantra* is actually an *avatara* (incarnation) of the Supreme Lord, manifested in the form of sound. He vowed that anyone who hears or chants this mantra, even once, will receive eternal benefit.⁴

Scripture explains that in our times, mantra meditation is the easiest and most rewarding activity one can engage in [SB11.5.32]. Whether it is spiritually or materially motivated, the benefits exist.

Actor turned activist Russell Brand is a regular visitor of ISKCON in the UK. He says that mantra meditation "changes consciousness". After accepting guidance from one of ISKCON's most famous gurus, Radhanath Swami, Russell says "Hare Krishna" to every person he meets, and the millions of people who tune in to his podcasts. So, whatever your position, the ascetic monk, the high-profile celeb, the cutthroat corporate or high school cheerleader, no other activity gives you such freedom, in any circumstance and any location. Every second of everyday, out aloud or in your mind, a mantra can always be uttered.

1. Jevning R., et al. The physiology of meditation: a review. A wakeful hypometabolic integrated response. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews* 16(3):415-24, 1992.

2. Sedlmeier, P., Eberth, J., Schwarz, M., Zimmermann, D., & Haerig, F. The psychological effects of meditation: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 138(6), 1139-1171, 2012.

3. Fergusson L.C. Field Independence and art achievement in meditating and nonmeditating college students. *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 75: 1171-1175, 1992.

4. Srila Prabhupada Lecture September 8, 1966 New York



My School Timetable

Name _____

Grade _____

	Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8
Day 1								
Day 2								
Day 3								
Day 4								
Day 5								
Day 6								
Day 7								

Perspective and Prayer

Family Matters

Krishangi Radhe Dasi

I have never been one for resolutions as I fear that I may not follow through as the months unfold. I also do not view the New Year as being the only time to make positive changes in my life. With December a distant memory; the jolly laughter and festive spirit is now tucked away for more serious days ahead. If you dedicated time with family, it was time well spent indeed. With these memories etched in our hearts, we need to continuously fill our love tanks with quality time.

Time has become an elusive commodity. Technology has taken over the better part of communication with little time invested in a visit to a loved one. According to the World Health Organisation serious depression has increased by 50% in the last ten years. We have better facilities today with hi-tech phones, luxury cars, state-of-the-art aeroplanes and super-computers. Despite the rapid advancement of technology, we are still faced with depression, alcoholism, suicide, and the pressures to attain material comforts. This points out that although we are advancing, there is still a void.

This disturbance of the mind reflects in our personalities and relationships with others. Our minds are consumed by ways to acquire more. Accumulation of goods and money are viewed as a reflection of how powerful we are. And children mirror our activities. Adults, parents and care givers in particular, therefore need to base their lives and relationships on higher principles. What are the "higher principles"? Radhanath Swami explains that people often have conflicts in their relationships. In a marriage, two egos come together, living in close proximity and from this, naturally disputes arise. However, if the couple see the bigger picture of being in a relationship in service to God, then the little parts of their lives can be adjusted accordingly. If the vision, goals and purpose is unclear, then a natural result will be unhappiness

and chaos.

A lot of time is invested in worry: worry about not having enough, do I have medical aid, getting my children into the right schools, job satisfaction, etc. I came across a wall mount: Pray More, Worry Less. It made me stop and reaffirm the power of prayer. We have to remember that everything in the world is changing. Firstly, we do not like change and then, even if we understand that things have

to change, we want to control it. By understanding the eternal reality that we are not the controllers. Things will happen in their own way so let's find a more useful way to spend our time and energy. I recommend that we use time wisely through prayer rather than empty worry.

And there are outstanding examples of prayer in dire circumstances: Jesus Christ prayed with compassion on the crucifix. Srila Prabhupada when suffering a heart attack, turned to Krishna, and prayed, "I am simply a puppet in your hands..." Offering gratitude to God in the form of prayer is also essential. In some homes, when a child brings home his report card, it is first offered to God even before the parent views the scores. This teaches our children to be grateful for everything, whether it is good or bad.

When we take shelter of God, He helps by preserving what we have and carrying what we lack (Bg. 9.22). But prayer is not only for the bad times. Yes, it soothes the aching heart but it also delights the joyous heart. And when we turn to prayer in our joy then we acknowledge the Divine hand. This trains us not to turn to God only for solace but also to show gratitude for the many wonderful things in our lives.

*...use time
wisely through
prayer rather
than empty
worry.*



{ EVENT GUIDE }



Sarasvati Puja
24 January | Saturday



Shiva Ratri
18 February | Wednesday



Appearance of
Sri Advaita Acarya
26 January | Monday
Fast until midday



Appearance of
Lord Varahadeva
31 January | Saturday
Fasting is done on 30 January



Appearance of
Sri Nityananda Prabhu
1 February | Sunday
Fast until midday



Gaura Purnima: Appearance
of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu
5 March | Thursday
Fast until moonrise

EKADASI

Fast from all grains, beans and legumes

This fast awards spiritual benefits and detoxes the body and mind

Ekadasi

(Fast until midday for Lord Varahadeva)

30 January | Friday

Break fast 05:23 - 09:53

31 January | Saturday

Ekadasi

15 February | Sunday

Break fast 05:36 - 09:58

16 February | Monday

Ekadasi

1 March | Sunday

Break fast 05:47 - 10:01

2 March | Monday

Ekadasi

16 March | Monday

Break fast 06:47 - 10:01

17 March | Tuesday



Appearance anniversary of
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura
9 February | Monday
Fast until midday



Disappearance anniversary of
Srila Jagannatha Dasa Babaji
19 February | Thursday
Fast until midday

Mantra Gigs

Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple | Every Friday night at 7pm
Victoria Street Market | Saturday mornings at 10am

