



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

HARE KRISHNA NEWS

March/April 2022



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Vaishnava Calendar

10 Apr Su	Sri Rama Naumi: Lord Ramachandra's Appearance (Fast until midday)
12 Apr Tu	Ekadasi
13 Apr We	Break fast 07:31-10:02
14 Apr Th	Tulasi Jala Dan begins.
16 Apr Sa	Purnima Sri Balaram Rasayatra Sri Krishna Vasanta Rasa Appearance of Radha Kunda
25 Apr Mo	Srila Vrindavan Das Thakura's Disappearance
26 Apr Tu	Ekadasi
27 Apr We	Break fast 06:22 - 10:02
30 Apr Sa	Amavasya Sri Gadadhar Pandit's Appearance
3 May Tu	Aksaya Trtiya. Candana Yatra starts. (Continues for 21 days)
10 May Tu	Srimati Sita Devi's Appearance (Consort of Lord Sri Rama) Srimati Jahnava Devi's Appearance (Consort of Lord Nityananda)
12 May Th	Ekadasi
13 May Fr	Break fast 06:32 - 10:05
14 May Sa	Sri Jayananda Prabhu's Disappearance
15 May Su	Tulasi Jala Dan ends. Nrsimha Chaturdasi: Appearance of Lord Nrsimhadeva (Fast till dusk)
16 May Mo	Sri Sri Radha-Ramana Deva's Appearance Sri Madhavendra Puri's Appearance Sri Srinivas Acharya's Appearance
20 May Fr	Sri Ramananda Raya's Disappearance
26 May Th	Ekadasi
27 May Fr	Break fast 06:40 - 08:19 Srila Vrindavan Das Thakura's Appearance
9 Jun Th	Ganga Puja Sri Baladev Vidyabhusan's Disappearance Srimati Gangamata Gosvami's Appearance
10 Jun Fr	Pandava Nirjala Ekadasi
11 Jun Sa	Break fast 07:41 - 10:12
12 Jun Su	Panihati Cida Dahi Utsava
14 Jun Tu	Purnima Snana Yatra



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Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple At Sunset On The Cover

By Syama Radhika Devi Dasi

My name is Syama Radhika Devi Dasi and I received initiation on Gaura Purnima last year from His Holiness Bhakti Chaitanya Swami. I've been in Krishna Consciousness since birth but started taking it a bit more seriously as I got older and discovered the beauty of the journey that is *bhakti*. My parents are also devotees, and likewise a lot of my extended family are too, and so the process has been made a bit easier by their support and growing up in the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple, has only grown my appreciation for Their Lordships even more.

Art has always been something that has piqued my interest, be it musical, theatrical, or visual — I love it all. I started practicing painting when I moved "down under" to Australia a few years ago as a hobby that sort of blossomed. Moving had been quite difficult as I am very attached to Radha Radhanath and looked for ways to feel closer to Them again. Adi Purush Das had taken this wonderful picture of the temple during a sunset one afternoon, and when he sent it to me, I felt a rush of separation from Their Lordships. This picture was then curated using digital platforms and brought to life by painting those outlines using a mixture of water-based colours and acrylic paints.

My biggest inspiration is my younger cousin, Manjari, who is an exceptional artist in every aspect! Over the years I've witnessed her love and devotion she puts into a piece, and I can only aspire to do the same.

In *Bhagavad-gita* 6.30 Krishna says "For one who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, I am never lost, nor is he ever lost to Me," and so with that I hope that just like me, the readers are able to take away that Krishna is *everywhere* and that we're never truly alone even when we try to serve in separation.

"By Mutual Consultation" Living With Srila Prabhupada

Alone with my guru maharaja, I sat at his feet, my eye and ears wide open.

"I saw your article in *Back to Godhead*," he said. "It was very nice. You should write."

My attention was focused on his every word.

"This is your first business. Go on writing. We require many, many articles about Krishna consciousness. So you should devote yourself to writing."

"I will try, Srila Prabhupada," I said. "But why are you asking me? I have no special qualification."

"We require many to do this work, and we need you also. So, you travel with me and I will guide you. You come and stay with me."

I felt thrilled and honored—and a little intimidated. Prabhupada had never given me an instruction directly, in person. In fact, we hardly ever spoke personally, or privately, and now he was inviting me to stay with him.

I didn't know how it would work. I had always served under other devotees, and I wondered who would tell them about Srila Prabhupada's instruction. I asked, "How will we decide whether I should travel with you or what I should do?"

"By mutual consultation," he replied.

(Excerpt from *I'll Build You A Temple – The Juhu Story*, Prologue by Giriraj Swami.

You can get a copy of this book from the temple or from our online store. Cost R150)





Soul Poetry

At the end of the road
By Gaura Bhumi Devi Dasi

Along twists and turns
Through paths unknown

Lies a heart overgrown
With love overflown

The gardener prunes, cuts, and shapes
A safe space is what she creates

Roses, daisies and others galore
A scent for all and so many more

Come one, come all at your own pace
This garden belongs to a Higher Source and is
entirely love-laced

Come as you are, not as you should be
You and I, he and she?
Are stronger in community than we could ever be.

The Spiritual Warrior
(Dedicated to my friend, Syamesvari Devi Dasi, and
the spiritual warriors in Ukraine)
By Nikunja Vilasini Dasi

As the world cries with a war-torn Ukraine
A friend fights a war against a fierce cancer
Her courage is born not from guns or weapons
But whose shelter that gives hope and protection
Her faith is not hampered by the turn of the tide
Nor the pain that ravages her body
For she's become a spiritual warrior
One that trusts in the power of her captain
One that knows His protection is certain
For her true self is beyond bodily conditioning
Beyond the suffering of this cruel existence
Whether her body is saved or not
Her divine self will always be safe and secure
Beneath the canopies of jasmine and *champak*
In the groves of parrots and singing peacocks
Under the boughs of luxurious scents
In the shade of ever cooling breezes
Where the charming flute-player smiles
And says, "You are forever mine."

Why should our life be saved?
Questioned a wise soul in a war-wracked Ukraine
If you live, will you make a difference
If you live, would your life have been worth saving
Would you continue with your nonsense
Or make your mark for the better
Would you waste your time in useless talk
Or be cavalier about life
as my warrior friend says
If the answer is yes, then rather die
If the answer is no, then turn the tide
And become worth saving

For one whose refuge is the merciful Lord
There is gain in life or in death
Such souls create good fortune for others on earth
And soar like birds to where they belong
To the kingdom of God, their rightful place

So be fierce like the spiritual warrior
Be strong in the turbulent weather
This world is not for the faint-hearted
It's meant to teach us better
To rise above the mind's desires
To cut the knot that binds us
To this world of duality and despair
To take us to a world
Where every word is a song
And every step is a dance
And where love abounds in its true glory

**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare**



Braided Basil Pesto Bread

The Vaishnava Chef

By Chandrashekara Das

Pesto Ingredients

1 ½ cup fresh basil
1 tsp hing
2/3 cup olive oil
½ cup cashews or pine nuts
125g Parmesan cheese; grated
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp salt
2 Tbsp lemon juice

Method

Blend basil, nuts, hing, salt, black pepper and lemon juice until smooth. Add in the grated Parmesan cheese and process further. Whilst the blender is running drizzle in the olive oil until desired consistency is obtained.

Bread Ingredients

4 cups white bread flour
2 tsp instant yeast
1 tsp salt
1 1/3 cup lukewarm water
½ cup Parmesan; grated (used for assembling)

Method

Mix together the bread flour, salt and yeast until

well combined. Add in water and knead until you have a smooth silky dough. Let rise in an oiled bowl until doubled in size.

To Assemble

Roll out the risen dough into a large rectangle of 5mm thickness.

Brush the dough with 2/3 cup pesto leaving a 3 cm border on one end and sprinkle over the grated Parmesan.

Roll dough towards the open border like a Swiss Roll. Cut the rolled dough lengthwise in half to expose the layers of bread.

Braid the halves, cut side facing up.

Place on a lined baking tray and roll into a ring scrunching the ends tightly.

Brush with olive oil and bake at 180°C for 30-40 minutes until golden.

Offer to Krishna with love and devotion.

Serve warm with extra pesto.

Calling All Writers & Artists

Are you an artist or writer? Would you like to see your art or article published in Hare Krishna News? We love to publish local talent.

Write to the editor, Rasa-sthali Dasi:
rasasthali@iskcondurban.net

Hare Krishna News layout & design by Rasa-sthali Dasi.

Saying “Yes” to Higher Happiness

Gaura Bhumi Devi Dasi

Let’s talk about the pink elephant in the room – the sexual impulse. Most world religions and spiritual philosophies acknowledge that lust is an obstacle on one’s spiritual journey, and they have some form of regulation, yet very few have a clear understanding of how sexual desire originates.

Lord Krishna, known as the original Cupid, is the source of everything, so unless there is a loving propensity in the Supreme, how can it exist in us? The spiritual world has no deficiency, so naturally a reflection of everything there exists here. But, as with all reflections, there are some distortions.

The desire to love is present both in Krishna and in His parts and parcels, and it is inherently spiritual as we are pleasure seeking beings. Krishna enjoys pleasure through the aspect of *hladini*, who manifests as Srimati Radharani. Distortion arises when we want to find happiness independently of Krishna and imitate Him.

The essence of conditioned life is wanting that same pleasure we get from serving Krishna but separate from Him. In the Ramayana, Ravana tried to do this by kidnapping Sita Devi. He got a shadow of Sita Devi, who brought him nothing but destruction. This is lust and it exists in the subtle body. Our power to desire comes from the soul as the soul is essential to consciousness, but how that power will be used depends on the type of desires stored in the mind.

It is factually impossible to become desire-less. If we are alive we must have *kama*, or desire. The urge to love is inherently spiritual, so it cannot be given up. Rather, trying to prematurely give up sex desire either results in anger or a hardened heart, because in trying to stop sexual feelings, you just stop all feelings. This cut-off results in eventual fall down — people leaving the path/pursuit for spiritual perfection. And we have seen this, more times than we’d like to say or admit, and maybe even in ourselves. We may fall down in much more embarrassing ways than would have happened otherwise. Krishna Himself says in *Bhagavad-gita* that He is sex life according to religious principles. So sex life in itself is not a



problem, but when it becomes a mental obsession, it is. This is detrimental for relationships, mental stability, and spirituality. Because we will never have the clarity of mind to focus on a higher spiritual reality. Krishna also mentions how the urge of sexual desire will come as long as we have a material body, but one who tolerates it becomes situated in yoga and happiness. The way to happiness is not by imagination that aggravates our obsession, rather it is through purification.

In this realm, sex offers the greatest pleasure. We need to find a higher desire, something more than simply saying no. Constant denial is torture.

Bhakti doesn't wait for material desires to completely end before entering our heart. *Bhakti* is all about saying yes, saying yes to higher happiness and automatically saying no to a lower happiness. Krishna says that our ability to say no to lower temptations will become steady and stable only when we connect with a higher happiness.

Sex is not the pleasure it promises to be. The actual happiness from it is fleeting. No matter how healthy we are, our capacity for enjoying something is limited, yet our longing for happiness is permanent. Sex cannot give this. Despite knowing all this theory we struggle, because lust burns in the heart and unrealised philosophy cannot cool it.

We often find ourselves caught in tension between knowledge and culture. We know what we are supposed to do, but the culture surrounding us is the very opposite. When we have tension around the rules meant to shape and nourish devotees but we are practicing surrounded by the opposite, more often than not, the culture of the world wins, such is the power of association. But, in order to strengthen our intelligence and weaken our mind, we have to say yes to Krishna. Married life centred on Krishna helps us to do this.

Realisation comes through regulation, and regulation comes through choice. Daily, we have to make a decision on how to absorb our consciousness. At every moment, we will feel the material energy pulling on us. When Krishna sees us choosing Him despite the hammering of material energy, the relationship we have with Him thickens. We have to consciously understand what we're doing with our consciousness and desires. If we are preparing ourselves for a lifetime of choosing Krishna, we have to understand that we're up against a lifetime battle against sex desire. These are the invisible bars of the material world. This is why people struggle to leave the material realm.

If we want to transcend sex desire, we are going to have to become profoundly philosophical. Because it is our responsibility to arrange our lives in a way of complete absorption in Krishna. If we are not absorbed in *bhakti*, we must be absorbed in material desires. Even in the best of times, sexual desire has perplexed the highest of beings like Lord Brahma and Indra. Learning of their complex experiences, how many of us will sign up for a lifetime struggle?

We all need to be encouraged to express ourselves authentically and have unconditional acceptance within the principles of *bhakti*.

Yes, we are not our body, but we are currently in and identifying with a certain material situation. And we are conditioned by its constitution.

We all need to be encouraged to express ourselves authentically and have unconditional acceptance within the principles of *bhakti*. We must be encouraged to find ourselves as individuals while being cognisant of the society and culture we find ourselves in. At the time of creation, someone as advanced as Lord Brahma had a hard time understanding who he is when he was surrounded by nothingness.

It comes back to strong community and the power of a unifying philosophy. Being well nestled in community takes one so much further in life. We all want a home community we look forward to being a part of. So we need to hold space for people who go through struggles, because when it comes down to it, everyone is dear to Krishna and will always come back to Him. During times of struggle our devotional side may be covered, but at our core we have a relationship with Krishna and it cannot be shaken. Struggles can be overcome through healthy, mature conversation.

Ultimately my concern about how am I practicing *Bhakti* should be helping me rise to my own devotional identity. I need to understand that rules are there for my nourishment as a devotee and I should follow them as such. We practice principles of freedom through restriction. If we want anything in the world that is worthy, we have to accept some restriction.

So, we need to hold the standard on our head and find an authentic desire for our spiritual endeavour. Doing it simply for that sake alone isn't sustainable or healthy. And ultimately, have faith in the process. It's gotten us this far. Shame around something doesn't create *bhakti*. How much do we believe in *bhakti* as compared to believing in our insecurities? Because only *bhakti* creates *bhakti*.

Spot the Difference • For the Kids • By Mathureswara Das

This ecstatic kirtan party is an original artwork by Mathureswara Das. Can you find the 10 differences?

