



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

# HARE KRISHNA NEWS

May/June 2023



**Bhakti Yoga Society on UKZN**  
Oh Ye of Growing Faith  
**The Guiding Light of Intention**

## In This Issue

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Living with Srila Prabhupada<br>An Address to American Youth                    | 3  |
| Bhakti Yoga Society at UKZN   | 4  |
| Soul Poetry<br>Death Be   | 6  |
| Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Closer to Home  | 7  |
| Guiding Light of Intention  | 8  |
| ISKCON Environmental Initiative<br>The Ecotheology of our Tradition<br>– Part 5 | 9  |
| Oh Ye of Growing Faith  | 11 |
| For the Kids<br>Krishna's Favourites Colouring Craft                            | 12 |
| The Vaishnava Chef<br>Lemon Poppy Seed Loaf                                     | 13 |

### How to Contact Us

Call 031 403 3328 or  
WhatsApp Hotline 062 526 3606 or  
temple@iskcondurban.net

### How to subscribe to the Week Ahead email:

1. Send an email to temple@iskcondurban.net  
Type "subscribe" and <yourname> in the  
subject line.

### How to subscribe to SSRRT News WhatsApp

1. Save this number in your contacts:  
SSRRT News +27 81 759 0191
2. Send a "subscribe" and <yourname> to the  
above number
3. You will receive a confirmation notification.
4. Kindly note: this is a no-reply broadcast  
service.
5. You MUST save the number to your contacts  
and MUST subscribe personally in order to  
receive the broadcasts or



Scan QR code to join SSRRT  
News WhatsApp broadcast.  
Receive Daily Darshan & the  
latest news and events at the  
Temple.

## Vaishnava Calendar

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 8 Jun Th  | Sri Vakresvara Pandit's Appearance   |
| 13 Jun Tu | Sri Srivasa Pandit's Disappearance   |
| 14 Jun We | Ekadasi  |
| 15 Jun Th | Break fast 06:49 - 10:13   |
| 17 Jun Sa | Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's<br>Disappearance (Fast till noon)<br>Sri Gadadhar Pandit's Disappearance   |
| 19 Jun Mo | Gundica Marjan   |
| 20 Jun Tu | Ratha Yatra<br>Sri Svarup Damodar Gosvami's<br>Disappearance<br>Sri Sivananda Sena's Disappearance   |
| 24 Jun Sa | Hera Pancami<br>(4 days after Ratha Yatra)<br>Sri Vakresvara Pandit's<br>Disappearance   |
| 28 Jun We | Return Ratha<br>(8 days after Ratha Yatra)   |
| 29 Jun Th | Ekadasi  |
| 30 Jun Fr | Break fast 06:52 - 10:17   |
| 3 Jul Mo  | Guru (Vyasa) Purnima<br>Srila Sanatana Gosvami's<br>Disappearance<br>First month of Chaturmasya begins<br>(fast from green leafy vegetables) |
| 7 Jul Fr  | Srila Gopala Bhatta Gosvami's<br>Disappearance   |
| 10 Jul Mo | Srila Lokanath Gosvami's<br>Disappearance  |
| 11 Jul Tu | The incorporation of ISKCON<br>in New York   |
| 13 Jul Th | Ekadasi  |
| 14 Jul Fr | Break fast 06:50 - 10:18   |
| 18 Jul Tu | Purusottam Adhik Masa begins<br>(Chaturmasya is not observed during<br>Purusottam Adhik Masa.)   |
| 29 Jul Sa | Ekadasi  |
| 30 Jul Su | Break fast 06:42 - 07:05   |
| 11 Aug Fr | Ekadasi  |
| 12 Aug Sa | Break fast 09:30 - 10:11   |

Write to the Hare Krishna News Editor  
Rasa-sthali Dasi: rasasthali@iskcondurban.net  
Layout & design by Rasa-sthali Dasi.

Quotes from Back To Godhead Magazine, the Bhagavad-gita, Sri  
Ishopanishad and the art on page 9 are © The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust  
International, Inc. www.Krishna.com. Used with permission.

Child Protection Office:  
durbancpt@gmail.com • 076 719 6461 • www.childprotectionoffice.org



# SRI SRI RADHA RADHANATH TEMPLE

+27 31 403 3328 | temple@iskcondurban.net | www.iskcondurban.net

ISKCON Durban  
DurbanKrishna





## An Address to American Youth

### Living with Srila Prabhupada

Excerpt from Back to Godhead Magazine 1967, Vol 1, No.13

My dear young beautiful boys and girls of America, I have come to your country with great hope and a great mission. My Spiritual Master, Om Vishnupad Paramahansa Paribrajaka Acharya Sri Sriman Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaj, asked me to preach this cult of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the Western World. That was the seed-giving incident. Gradually the seed fructified, and I was prepared to come to the Western World. Still, I do not know why I was so much attracted by the land of America. But from within Krishna dictated that instead of going to Europe I should better go to America. So you can see that I have come to your country under order of superior authority. And even after arriving here, when I perceived that some of the youngsters are being misled, confused and frustrated - this is not the condition in your country only, but in every country, the young people are neglected, although it is they who are the flower and future hope of everyone - so I thought to myself that if I go to the American youth with my message and they join with me in this movement, then it will spread all over the world and then all the problems of the world will be solved. How I would like to be with you in person today, but Krishna has prevented that, so please pardon me and accept my blessings in this written form.

This process of Samkirtan, this singing and dancing is so nice because from the very beginning it places everyone on the spiritual platform. There are different platforms or levels to our existence: the bodily platform, the mental platform, the intellectual platform, and the spiritual platform. When you stand on the spiritual platform then all the problems created by the necessities of the body, mind, intellect, and ego become solved. Therefore I appeal to you to join this movement most seriously. The process is very simple: we ask everyone to come join with us in chanting, hear something of the philosophy of life taught by Lord Krishna, take a little *prasadam* (foodstuff that is prepared and offered to the Lord), and peacefully, with refreshed mind go home. That is our mission.

We do have certain restrictions; practically, they are not restrictions, but something better in place of something inferior. The other day, Mr Alan Burke questioned me on his television program, "Swamiji, why do you insist on marriage?" And I answered him, "Unless one becomes peaceful in home life, how can he make any advance in any other area of life or knowledge? Therefore everyone should get married just to be happy and peaceful." You are all beautiful, nice educated boys and girls, why shouldn't you get married and live happily? If you live peacefully, regulated lives, eating nothing but Krishna *prasadam*, then the tissues in your brain will develop for spiritual consciousness and understanding.

However, if you are not agreeable to these simple restrictions, still I request you to join the chanting with us. Everybody can do that, and that will gradually clarify everything, and all problems will be solved, and you will find a new chapter of your life. Just this week I have received a letter from a girl in New Jersey who has had such an experience. She writes:

Dear Swamiji,

You don't know me by name, but I am the girl who joined your parade in Washington Square this past Saturday. When I first saw your group I thought you were all crazy. Either that or on dope of some kind. After listening and talking with some of you, I realized that it was neither of those. You people plainly believed in what you were doing and I admired you for that much; but my curiosity drove me further and I had to find out why. So I followed you and as I did, the chant you sang began to take hold. The next thing I knew I felt free of myself and I was singing too. I didn't know where I was or where I was going but I was too elated to care. It wasn't until we stopped that I learned where I was. By that time I had picked up bits and pieces of what Krishna Consciousness was about. One of your members asked me to visit your temple and I followed you still further, hoping to discover just what it was that made you feel so strongly about something I'd never heard of. After having taken a meal with you and reading your literature I left; but not alone. I took with me a new awareness of life. It occurred to me how futile my desires for the material things in life were: that a new dress, or big house or color television were not important. If only people would open their eyes to the endless number of pleasures God has already given us, there would be no need to look any further. You people are truly lucky. You may have had to do without many things but because of this you are able to enjoy the simple God-given treasures of the world. Because of your beliefs, you are the wealthy; and I thank you for sharing a bit of that wealth with me.

So we invite you to please chant with us it is such a nice thing; come to our temple if you like; take a little *prasadam*; and be happy. It is not very difficult if you just chant this HARE KRISHNA, HARE KRISHNA, KRISHNA KRISHNA, HARE HARE, HARE RAMA, HARE RAMA, RAMA RAMA, HARE HARE. That will save you. Thank you very much, and God bless you. Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta



## Bhakti Yoga Society at UKZN By Madhurya Kadambini Devi Dasi

Bhakti Yoga Society (BYS), aims at cultivating meaningful and caring relationships with students on campus using ancient spiritual knowledge and practices as the driving force for these relationships.

We look for meaningful connections with a sense of belonging and purpose but often times it is misguided and short lived. I find that students tend to be anxious about their studies and become so absorbed in it that they forget the fundamental need of self-realization. Through the practice of *bhakti-yoga* or devotional service to the Supreme Lord can we find peace, compassion, and love within this world and our relationships – this is what we would like to share with students. Not only can they feel the bliss and joy from *kirtan* but *bhakti-yoga* can instil in them the necessary tools to deal with the hardships of life.

The BYS team goes every week to Howard and Westville campuses. Bringing the *maha-mantra* onto campus through *kirtan* is an all-inclusive way to reach out to as many students as possible and is an easy way to share something that can go deep into their hearts and consciousness. Through *kirtan* we all dance, sing, and share in the love and joy of God together. Not only do we share this spiritually potent mantra but we also give nourishment to the body by bringing them wholesome vegetarian food. Anyone and everyone on campus can get a free lunch from us and hopefully this act of kindness will leave them with a lasting impression that *bhakti-yoga* practitioners are loving and selfless people in a self-centred culture.

Our team distributes books on *bhakti-yoga* as well. These books provide answers to the questions our hearts and souls are yearning to know. The knowledge awakens the spiritual and blissful quality lying dormant within us all. These books are so potent that they can give meaning, perspective, and solutions to the difficulties life throws at us. It is important that students be exposed to such learning because they are the future leaders and if the future leaders are equipped with transcendental knowledge, it means great results for everyone.

The free mantra meditation session is held on the grass and begins with a brief explanation of the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* and fundamental *bhakti* principles. We let the mantra speak for itself and work its way into the hearts of the chanters. We sing *kirtan* together and encourage new chanters to read along with their mantra cards, it's an easy way to get familiar with the mantra as well as focus the mind on the sound vibration.

Students have responded positively to our program. It is deeply gratifying to see the joy on someone's face when they sing the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* for the first time. Even better than that is seeing students return each week to again join in the chanting of the *maha-mantra*.

We are open and happy to include anyone and everyone who is interested in helping or participating in BYS. You can join our team by sending us a WhatsApp: 074 629 1122. It is a joyful and fulfilling experience and a chance to meet and serve with wonderful people who carry this mantra in their hearts.

*Two students share their experience:*

"We have had some wonderful times together, even though it is for a short time each week. It's been so nice meeting people who want absolutely nothing from you other than to share some spiritual teachings and healthy food. And to add to that it is made by people with a spiritual consciousness, which makes the food even more nourishing. Even more outstanding than that, is that it's all been for free. The mantra meditation at first felt awkward and very foreign to me. Hence it took me quite some time to actually connect. Needless to say, I'm not yet fully connected. But as they explained the meaning of the words of the mantra and how it works, I started to feel more comfortable. But still, sometimes I get lost in my mind trying to get the words right and then I end up losing my focus on the actual meditation. It wasn't until we visited the temple and meditated there, that I felt so deeply connected.

My body felt lighter and I felt like I was floating (I am not exaggerating). I am not very consistent with the meditation when I am alone, but I try."

*Nhlonipho, student from UKZN Westville Campus*

"Bhakti yoga? What is that even? This was probably the first question I had asked myself subconsciously the first time that I was invited. I remember the first day I joined, I was rushing home after a long and daunting, yet not very productive, day on campus. I had planned to eat and then sleep for the rest of the day, but looking back I am grateful that I didn't. I have learned that there are different ways of meditating, mantra meditation being one of them. We have focused on this specifically. Not only has it helped me reach a new level of inner peace, but I have also gained a non-judgemental space where we can discuss or learn about topics the general public would have otherwise shunned. Through the Bhakti Yoga Society, I, along with others have gained a community filled with individuals that were once strangers but now companions."

*Kim, BYS student from UKZN Westville Campus*

**BHAKTI YOGA RETREAT**  
**14 & 15 JUNE**

**LIFE**  
**LOVE**  
**PURPOSE**  
**FREEDOM**

- Cost: R50 (including transport, meals and accomodation)
- RSVP to +27 76 273 5661 (Madhurya) by 10 June
- Pick up at Westville campus @ 10am

**FB: BHAKTI YOGA SOCIETY DURBAN**  
**EMAIL: BYSFRESH@GMAIL.COM**  
**WHATSAPP: +27 74 629 1122**  
**IG: bhaktiyogasociet DURBAN**

**BHAKTI**  
**YOGA**  
SOCIETY



This poem is a reflection on death and its relationship to life, inspired by my personal experiences and influenced by my reading of the *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*. While the poem contains abstract and metaphorical language, it explores different aspects and perceptions of death. Here's a breakdown of some key themes and interpretations:

**Death as a transformative force:** in this poem, I attempt to portray death as a process of transition or weaning, where the soul moves from one state to another. In describing death fading into a simmer, suggests a gradual dissolution or moving of the individual from one life story into another.

**Death amidst life's activities:** The body is known as the field of activities, it is a complex machine of exacting works and work that is never truly alive and therefore the true knower of death as in it's claimable state, hence the reference to death as a friend who is intimately acquainted with the battlefield of material life's many activities such as those of butchery that keep the living entity bound and trapped. It is an implication that death is intertwined with the chaotic and sometimes brutal nature of material existence.

**Death as a revealer of reality:** through the poem, I try to encourage the hearer to know death to be true and unmasked, and to represent the reality from which everything originates; Krishna says, "I am all-devouring death, and I am the generating principle of all that is yet to be..." *Bg 10.34*. The poem hints at death's role in exposing the hidden aspects of existence and the intrinsic connections between seemingly contradictory elements.

**Death's paradoxical nature:** The poem presents death as both beautiful through the lens of spiritual understanding and toxic within the material experience; pointing at this reality as an act of collecting credit for trivial matters and the living entity being a forgetter of the true merits of existence. This paradox reflects the complex and multifaceted nature of death, which encompasses both positive and negative aspects in accordance to the consciousness of whomever may experience it.

**The divine amidst the hectic:** The poem alludes to divinely hectic scenes, suggesting that even within the chaos and busyness of life and death, the divinity of the living entity and The Divine are present. It acknowledges the simultaneous oneness and difference of The Divine, emphasising its eternal truth amid the tumultuous nature of complete existence.

Overall, the poem seems to grapple with the philosophical and existential questions surrounding death, acknowledging its significance as a transformative and revealing force within the larger tapestry of life. It invites contemplation on the relationship between life and death, the nature of reality, and The Divine presence amidst the hectic nature of complete existence.

## DEATH BE.

### Soul Poetry

By Atma Tattva Das

death be weaned,  
 fade into the burning milks' simmer  
 you teething soul,  
 slither  
 collecting marbles with that pomegranate fiend...  
 you are the one full friend of this field of work,  
 battlefield of activities of butchery  
 in divinely hectic scenes.  
 death be true  
 be un-screened,  
 be the reality of all from which we've come,  
 hold the hails and activities  
 in divinely hectic scenes,  
 be the bubbling of toxic waste  
 in completely beautiful things  
 we've not yet met or seen  
 in divinely hectic scenes...  
 be the perfect pyramid scheme  
 for collecting credit for nonsense things  
 and forgetting the merits  
 of divinely hectic scenes,  
 be that queen,  
 be that sharp edge of a mirror  
 that catches the shimmer of bliss  
 but not the truth  
 of divinely hectic beings.  
 He is and He isn't,  
 simultaneous oneness and difference  
 yet remains The Truth  
 of ALL divinely hectic things.  
 be the truth that is a truth,  
 truth to give the most  
 to thoughts to truths  
 of The Most Divinely Hectic Being.



## Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Closer to Home

Did you know that there are *bhakti-yoga* gatherings in 13 residential areas across Durban? Look out for the weekly meetings in your area! These smaller gatherings are geared to give families a deeper experience of *bhakti* in a cosy environment. You can make friends in your area, do devotional service together, and it is a great way for families to build better community bonds.

### **Gillitts**

Wednesdays @7pm • Temple next to Gillitts Primary

### **Hillary**

Wednesdays @7pm • 38 Fourth Street

### **Kendra Hall**

Fridays @7pm • 5 John Zikhali Road, Greyville

### **Lotus Park**

Wednesdays @7pm • Lotus Park Community Hall, 4 Araucaria Place

### **Merebank**

Mondays @6:30pm • Merebank Community Centre, 2 Dharwar Road

### **Newlands**

Thursdays @7pm • 2 Centre Road, Sea Cow Lake

### **Northdene**

Tuesdays @7pm • 22 Kashmir Avenue, Nirvana Hills

### **Park Rynie**

Sundays @8am • 519 First Avenue

### **Pinetown/Sarnia**

Wednesdays @7pm • 11 Susan Road, Sarnia

### **Port Shepstone**

Fridays @7pm • Shree Ram Narayan Temple, 14 Dairy Road, Marburg

### **Unit 7 Chatsworth**

Fridays @7pm • Shantik Foundation Road 741/742, Montford

### **Unit 9/11 Chatsworth**

Tuesdays @6:45pm • Crossmoor Secondary School

56 Golden Poppy Crescent

### **Westville**

Saturdays @3pm • UKZN Hindu Centre, Westville Campus

Contact Dayal Caitanya Das 0835571062 or Paramatma Das on 0765495474

# The Guiding Light of Intention

By Pranada Dasi

“When the soul looks inward, it obtains its spiritual *rasa*, and the perverted *rasa* wanes off in proportion to the development of the spiritual *rasa*.” ~Srla Bhaktivinoda Thakur’s *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: His Life and Precepts*

Through multiple health crises, I have learned some lessons about the art of acceptance. In order to face down the enemy, resistance, which blocks our surrender and therefore our movement toward love of God, we do well to fortify ourselves with clear intention. What am I doing? Why am I doing it?

The answers to the above questions will be different for each person and his or her particular circumstances, but the common denominator for everyone should be that we set our sights on the highest ideal rooted in solid philosophical understanding. If you set out on solid ground, then you have something very tangible to hold onto as you ride the ever-changing, nerve-wracking waves of a particular crisis.

Without consciously thinking about it, this is what I did when I made the decision to go to Vrindavan for the regimen. I set clear intentions. They were more than simply good intentions. They were urgent guiding principles, and achieving my goals was deeply important for me – more important than life itself.

I felt obliged to care for the *sadhaka-deha* given to me by my spiritual master. This sacred duty was rooted in deep gratitude for the rare gift I had received; the indebtedness – the abiding humility I felt – for the inestimable good fortune and opportunity to engage in *bhakti*; and the painful awareness that I had more inner work to do in order to be able to factually repay the gift Srila Prabhupada gave me and acknowledge the personal sacrifices he had made to give it to me. These feelings of love loomed large.

To eventually be successful I needed to determinedly try to make as much progress as possible before dying so I could stand on more solid spiritual ground. At least I should reach the more secure platform of *nistha*. The symptoms of *nistha* are described in the third verse of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s *Sikshastakam*:

*trinad api su-nicena taror iva sahisnuna  
amanina mana-dena kirtaniyah sada harih*

“One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor yet is always prepared to give all respect to others can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord.”

Though I had held this as a goal for some time, my desire to make tangible progress increased. It intensified a lot. If I left the body in a lower level of *bhakti* it would mean that my next life would be filled with as much mixed devotion as this one was. Until reaching *nistha*, I could easily veer off the path; my journey to loving Krishna and guru prolonged unnecessarily. The time I had left to make progress was decreasing. I had to do more, try harder. Whatever it took, I was going to do it. No more hesitation.

Therefore I was committed to following the Hodal regimen, but I also intended to take practical actions to improve my level of Krishna consciousness. I thought my attempt would focus on developing the qualities of *nistha* listed in the *Sikshatakam* verse. As you’ll see, I was sent in another direction, to the way we develop *nistha* itself, which will automatically grant us these good qualities.

My intention, backed by sincere desire, was extremely beneficial, as it formed an anchor that held me while wild winds roared. I would remind myself of these intentions repeatedly; they would be my guide as I faced months of a treatment that was the most difficult thing I’ve ever done.

Setting intentions, I’ve come to understand, besides being an initial step in facing crises is itself a part of the process of surrender. Sometimes it can take a while to become clear on your intentions as you sort through inner conflicts and confusion and resistance.

Your intention will set the tone and tenor of your journey. It will illuminate your path when everything is dark, when you doubt your next step, and when you lose hope. It is a beacon that will guide and encourage you. You’ll also be in a stronger position to act firmly and resolutely without constantly wrestling doubts and second-guessing your decision. Periodically you may have to reassess your choices, such as when given new information or facing changes in circumstances, but in general it’s helpful to be clear about an intention and then remain firm in it.





ISKCON Environmental Initiative  
The Ecotheology of our Tradition, Part 5:  
Our devotional tradition and culture teaches us  
how to live in harmonious relationship with  
creation  
Krishna Kishore Das (Christopher Fici, PhD)

The Ecological Elements of Chaitanya  
Vaishnava Theology (continued)

Chaitanya Vaishnavas understand that the fabric of material creation emerges from the transcendent personal energies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because material creation emerges from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we have a duty to live in harmony with material creation. Material creation is sacred because it emanates from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Material creation is originally in perfect harmony and balance because it emanates from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the *Sri Isopanisad* it is written that: "the Personality of Godhead is perfect and complete, and because He is completely perfect, all emanations from Him, such as this phenomenal world, are perfectly equipped as complete wholes.

Whatever is produced of the Complete Whole is also complete in itself. Because He is the Complete Whole, even though so many complete units emanate from Him, He remains the complete balance..." (Invocation). There is a perfect arrangement for the practice of *bhakti-yoga* through material creation, as long as we know how to live in harmony with material creation and with all living beings. The *Sri Isopanisad* further explains this element of harmony: "Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong." (*Mantra One*) When we understand that the material creation originally belongs to Krishna, then we will be able to lessen our tendency to lord over the material creation through abusive and exploitative behaviors. We then begin to understand that Krishna has provided for us, through the elements of material creation, everything we need to survive, to live well in harmony with creation, and to practice *bhakti-yoga*. As Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to this mantra of the *Sri Isopanisad*:

One should therefore be intelligent enough to know that except for the Lord no one is a proprietor of anything. One should accept only those things that are set aside by the Lord as his quota. The cow, for instance, gives milk, but she does not drink that milk: she eats grass and straw, and her milk is designated as food for human beings. Such is the arrangement of the Lord. Thus we should be satisfied with those things He has kindly set aside for us, and we should always consider to whom those things we possess actually belong. Take, for example, our dwelling, which is made of earth, wood, stone, iron, cement and so many other material things. If we think in terms of *Sri Isopanisad*, we must know that we cannot produce any of these building materials ourselves. We can simply bring them together and transform them into different shapes by our labor. A laborer cannot claim to be a proprietor of a thing just because he has worked hard to manufacture it.

Furthermore, Prabhupada is very clear that disrespect of this harmonious arrangement for our material and spiritual well-being will inevitably lead to suffering. Disrespect of this harmonious arrangement and disrespect to material creation and our fellow living beings is sinful. Prabhupada writes in his purport to this Mantra:

The root of sin is deliberate disobedience to the laws of nature through disregarding the proprietorship of the Lord. Disobeying the laws of nature or the order of the Lord brings ruin to a human being. Conversely, one who is sober, who knows the laws of nature, and who is not influenced by unnecessary attachment or aversion is sure to be recognized by the Lord and thus become eligible to go back to Godhead, back to the eternal home.



© The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International, Inc. www.krishna.com. Used with permission.

## The Guiding Light of Intention Continued from page 8

In this way, with clear focus, all internal movement and all external action, however humble or small, becomes directed as an intentional offering to our Lord, a service placed at his feet to please him. Illness, losses, and crises define our new service. Humbled and feeling small by the limitations of our condition, we can understand our position as servants.

I can't overstate the importance of carefully, thoughtfully laying this groundwork of making intentional choices for a course of action after examining our motives, choosing high spiritual ground to aim for, and acting on the principle of accepting what is. Choosing a course of action in response to a crisis and setting an intention is best guided by the counsel and support of friends, preferably more advanced Vaishnavas.

Though this is obvious, and we all know it, I must say it: No one can do the work for us. As much as friends and guides may be able to help us come to our personal clarity, as much as our friends may want to support us, we go to the inner world alone. There is no way around this. It is a natural, important part of purification. It takes some getting used to – even some grieving and feeling isolated – but it is a powerful part of the journey. We experience that our actual shelter lies only with Krishna. And it is to him we must turn.

Though I won't go into details here, there's another important consideration I want to briefly mention: We may need counseling. That I'm not going into details does not mean this isn't a crucial aspect that we ought to tend to. The inner work triggers much from the subconscious that has to be dealt with. Many "Whys?" often haunt us, and even though we know the philosophy, we wrestle with living it. We may also need to sort through unprocessed emotions acquired from the traumas of material existence. Additionally, living with chronic pain or long-term illness requires its own set of psychophysical skills that we can garner through counseling.

Therefore, we may require the assistance of a trained professional. There are devotees who are counselors. If the issues that arise are somewhat less severe, or if we've already done core work earlier, we may be able to make our way alone, or we may just need to process mental content periodically with a confidante. Obviously we should do whatever is required. By the time I had reached Vrindavan, I had already been quite ill for many years and had faced significant mental and emotional challenges, so I had done a lot of psychological work. As much as I was suffering, I had had enough experience of this kind of terrain that I knew what I had to do, and I just had to do it.

Excerpt from *When Illness Takes Hold* by Pranada Dasi (ACBSP) & Archana-siddhi Dasi (ACBSP). You can download/view this book for free here: <https://www.pranadacomtois.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/When-Illness-Takes-Hold.pdf>

## ISKCON Environment Initiative Continued from page 9

By being neither overly attached nor averse to material nature, we can understand this harmonious arrangement of creation created by Krishna for our material and spiritual well-being. Understanding the laws of nature is essential for our practice of *bhakti-yoga*. By understanding the laws of nature we can continue to create and develop our *sangas* (devotional communities) in a manner which is harmonious with material nature.

Because creation is infused with Divine energies and connected to Divine intention and design, the structure of the cosmic universe is understood to be arranged in an ideal way for the flourishing of life. Chaitanya Vaishnavas are compelled to act in concert with intention, design and order. By following this teaching the Chaitanya Vaishnava lives in an ecologically sound way and in ecological harmony with all living beings. This teaching marks Chaitanya Vaishnava theology as an inherent ecotheology and marks the practice of *bhakti* as the practice of *eco-bhakti*.

### Moving towards Chaitanya Vaishnava ecotheology-in-action (*eco-bhakti*)

Our ISKCON Environmental Initiative humbly hopes this document concerning the ecotheology of our tradition helps our global network of *sangas* to become inspired to put this ecotheology into action. How can our practices of *bhakti* become infused with care for the Earth and for creation so that our practices of *bhakti* are also a practice of *eco-bhakti*? While we plan to address the prescriptive side of our ecotheology in a separate document, we want to end here with a few suggestions as to how we may move towards a more ecologically-integrated culture of devotion.

-Sri-la Prabhupada's vision of a network of rural communities connected to, supportive of, and supported by urban centers is arguably the most important initiative of ISKCON in the 21st Century. We have a tremendous opportunity to become more relevant and visible servant-leaders of the global environmental/ecological movement.

-The networking of rural communities and urban centers is essential. Rural communities can best emerge and prosper if they are also at the foreground of economic and cultural support within ISKCON. Urban centers often get the majority of attention and funding. It is time to balance out this attention and support for our rural communities which exist and which will emerge in the upcoming years and decades.

-Rural communities can further urban centers through such programs as CSAs (community supported agriculture), education and retreat centers, and cow/animal protection programs.

## Oh Ye of Growing Faith

Gaura Bhumi Devi Dasi

The Demon King stared down his nose in palpable fury, hissing like a cobra backed into a corner. Any final strands of warmth he had for the little boy had finally snapped with the boy's indignant attitude. "Where is He?" spat Hiranyakashipu, "If your God is as powerful as you claim, why won't He show Himself? Is He in this room? Is He in this pillar?" Prahlada resolutely answered, "Yes!" At that moment, a roar cracked through the atmosphere and broke the Demon King's core.

Faith isn't something tangible. It can't slip through my fingers like the hand of a loved one, nor can I see it the way I can see warm summer sunsets. Yet the feeling faith evokes is somewhat similar. Faith isn't a matter of a tangible experience, but rather of leaning into the trust and acceptance we have within our relationships. Ultimately, our faith will be its' sturdiest when we lean into trusting Krishna. This means wholeheartedly believing that we are exactly where we're meant to be, and we are capable of becoming exactly who Krishna wants us to be. Prahlada was thrown off a mountain, left in a pit of poisonous snakes, and thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil. In

life, Krishna doesn't promise an existence with no rain, but what He does promise is an umbrella. The only way to get out of the storm, is to go through it, trusting that He will be waiting on the other side.

Why is Prahlada's faith so moving? Because Krishna wasn't just in his heart, but in his consciousness as well. Someone being in our consciousness adds a heightened sense of awareness and sensitivity to a relationship, which takes it deeper than simply wishing someone well. In the 18th Chapter of *Bhagavad-gita*, Krishna states how a person who lives their life in full consciousness of Him is able to overcome any and every obstacle in life. Krishna gracefully becomes the best friend of one who is able to do this. Krishna will always respond to our consciousness; if he could appear from a stone pillar, nothing is stopping Him from appearing out of a stone-like heart.

Despite killing Hiranyakashipu, Lord Nrsimhadeva's anger was very much alive. If anything, His growls were picking up in intensity. Fearful and worried eyes peered around the corner and glanced across the room in concern. The demigods were stumped. Why hadn't their prayers calmed the Lord down? After a few moments of thoughtful silence, Lord Brahma nudged Prahlada forward. He confidently yet humbly approached the Lord, whose golden fur was stained red with his father's blood. Lord Nrsimhadeva had singularly appeared for one devotee, so he had to be the one to calm Him down. Being the Supreme Lord, Krishna is full and complete within Himself, whether we worship Him or not. Yet, Krishna is so personal in His interactions with us, that there is something in His particular relationship with each of us, that is only present therein. Similarly, there is something in our life only we can do, which Krishna entrusts to us. And this is Krishna's sign of faith in us.

We are who we are, but are we all that we can be? Perhaps we're stuck in certain experiences because Krishna has faith in our potential to grow out of them.

Yes, Krishna is the ultimate provider and best friend of everyone, but there are some things He will only do for you. There are some experiences He will not tolerate you going through, just as there are certain experiences He will trust only you to manage. Krishna has faith in our potential. Let us have faith in His potency.



Thank you to Dheepana Gopi Devi for the cover art of Lord Nrsimhadeva.

# Krishna's Favourites Colouring Craft

For the Kids

Compiled by Lila Shuka Dasi

Grab your crayons, markers, paints and coloured pens and pencils! Time to colour some of Krishna's favorite things. And when you're done cut them out and paste them on a picture of Krishna you like the most (Yes! You get to choose!) Have fun.

Moms, dads, caregivers, we would love to see your kids creative spiritual collages. Send us a picture of your child's creative work to [temple@iskcondurban.net](mailto:temple@iskcondurban.net) and we will feature the best works in the next issue.

\*Parents and guardians, young children must be supervised when using scissors and glue.



Krishna's shark-shaped earrings.



## Lemon Poppy Seed Loaf

The Vaishnava Chef

By Ananga Sundari Dasi

### Ingredients

2 cups flour  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/4 cup butter  
1/4 cup oil  
1 cup buttermilk  
2 tblsp lemon juice  
1 tsp lemon zest  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
2 tsp poppy seeds

### Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Sift all dry ingredients including poppy seeds and set aside.

Beat together sugar, butter and oil until sugar is well dissolved, immediately add buttermilk, lemon juice, lemon zest and vanilla extract, whisk well.

Gradually add dry ingredients and fold, do not stir constantly as mixture will turn out stiff and cake will be hard.

Pour batter into a greased loaf tin and bake until done (skewer test).

I made a loaf out of this recipe but muffins will work well too.

Offer to Krishna and serve.