

International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder Acharya: His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



HARE KRISHNA NEWS

July - August 2014

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**The Environment Within
Knocking on Atheism's Door
Janmashtami Festival Guide**

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ISKCON Founder Acharya
His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Letters to the Editor

If you would like to share your temple experience, spiritual or service related realisations then write to Haripriya Devi Dasi: haripriya@nitai.co.za or Rasa-sthali Dasi: rasasthali@iskcondurban.net

Quoted verse translations and excerpts from purports to *Srimad Bhagavatam*, *Bhagavad-gita*, *Brahma Samhita*, and *Chaitanya-Charitamrita* and the photograph and art on pages 4, 6, 11, 12 and 16 are © The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International, Inc. www.Krishna.com. Used with permission.

Farewell Editor's Note

In the winter of 1978 my enthusiastic parents entered me into a fancy dress parade. They dressed me as a mini Lord Shiva. It was the first Hare Krishna Tent Campaign in our suburb. His Holiness Partha Sarathi Maharaj, the organiser of the programme took pity upon me — a young, nervous little girl. He took me aside and told me that Lord Shiva was one of Lord Krishna's greatest devotees and that he constantly chants the *maha-mantra*. I had never heard of the *maha-mantra*, so Maharaj gave me a set of *japa* beads and taught me how to chant Hare Krishna. When it was my turn to go on stage, I did exactly as he had told me. I walked to the centre of the stage, sat down and chanted a few mantras whilst moving the *japa* beads. It was kind of fun. The judges gave me the first prize and that's how my journey with ISKCON began.

Over the years I have been involved in a variety of services — from a fancy dress parade to managing the publication of the Hare Krishna News. My involvement in the newsletter has been a rewarding and enriching experience. I have learnt many valuable lessons and grown in every aspect of my life. One of my realisations that has constantly taken centre stage is the internal joy I experience while performing devotional service. I earnestly urge everyone to come join the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple community and lend a hand at anything, from cleaning vegetables to rendering personal service to the Deities. All services hold the same devotional value and most certainly brings fulfilment.

I am grateful to you, the readers, who have been a constant source of encouragement and inspiration. I am also grateful to the team of people who work tirelessly to put together each brilliant issue. I leave you in the capable and creative hands of Rasa-sthali Dasi, who has been my assistant editor for over four years. She will take over editorship of the Hare Krishna News. I wish her and her team success and joy.

Best wishes

Haripriya Devi Dasi



Design and Layout by Lashika Ravjee - 082 309 2396

What We Are All Hankering For

Message from the Co-President
Swarup Damodar Das

Recently my father passed away. His demise was quite auspicious—devotees were chanting Krishna's holy names in unison alongside a recording of Srila Prabhupada. *Tulasi* leaves and holy water were placed on his lips and cloth remnants from Lord Jagannath were on his head.

Besides the auspiciousness surrounding his passing, I was fortunate to experience another auspicious development - one I did not anticipate. During my father's extended time in hospital, I got to associate with various sections of my paternal family as they came to visit my father and offer support to my mum. Being somewhat out of familial circles for many years, my relatives were attracted to hear about my life and activities in Krishna consciousness.

Some of these relatives have had a religious background steeped either in impersonalism (the [mis]conception that ultimately the Absolute Truth has no form), or in ritualistic activities dedicated to fulfilling material desires. Following somewhat blindly the traditions of their parents, they found a sense of security in their beliefs albeit with little to no understanding. But when faced with issues that are especially stark like when having to acknowledge the temporal nature of this material body. Or the vivid dangers that lurk around us, and whether or not one is truly happy. Or just experiencing swings of momentary relief; the falsity of that security becomes apparent.

Apart from an account of what I had been doing over the past twenty years, I shared two essential principles of Krishna consciousness — that the Absolute Truth is ultimately a person — the Supreme Person with whom we all have a unique, eternal and blissful relationship. And that true lasting happiness can only be found in directing all our activities for the pleasure of Lord Krishna, the all attractive unlimited reservoir of pleasure. These fundamental truths, when expounded, touched their hearts and instilled a genuine sense of enquiry into the actual goals of human life. In a way, this was a last service my father offered — an opportunity to share true God consciousness with others.

As I witnessed their receptivity, I found myself revitalised by these truths. Truths I admit I may have shelved or taken for granted. That the Supreme Absolute Truth is a person, Krishna, is actually most inspiring and opens before us a path to eternity, knowledge and bliss. A path so unlike the non-reciprocating impersonal feature of the Lord or the materially binding ritualistic process

for sense gratification. These discussions helped me re-appreciate that which Srila Prabhupada endeavoured to gift the world—the reality of Krishna's transcendental form and the opportunity to develop a loving relationship with Him. As Srila Prabhupada wrote, "To save a man from impersonal calamity is the greatest service to humanity."

When I now stand before the astonishingly beautiful forms of Sri Sri Radha Radhanath and hear the spiritually soothing voice of Yamuna Devi singing the *Govindam Prayers*, I have a refreshed insight into what I am aspiring after—the highest truth, and a personal relationship with that Supreme Person.

*venum kvanantam aravinda-dalayataksam
barhavatamsam asitambuda-sundarangam
kandarpa-koti-kaminiya-visesa-sobham
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami*

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is adept in playing on His flute, with blooming eyes like lotus petals with head decked with peacock's feather, with the figure of beauty tinged with the hue of blue clouds, and His unique loveliness charming millions of Cupids. (*Brahma-samhita* 5.30)

By Srila Prabhupada's grace and desire, we all have opportunities to share that aspiration with others.

Notice Board

Kamala Sundari Dasi will now be doing the Take Care of Krishna administration.

Office hours: Tuesday - Friday 9:00am - 1:30pm
031 403 3328 | tck@iskcondurban.net.

We now have a Communications Office headed by Krishangi Radhe Dasi. You can write to her: communications@iskcondurban.net

The Temple will no longer host any funeral services.

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

For general queries call the temple at 031-4033328 between 9.30am-5pm.

For programme updates, Daily Darshan, and general information: www.iskcondurban.net

Durban Krishna



Ombudsman for ISKCON South Africa:

Tribanga Sundar Das
tribangasundar@gmail.com
SMS 072 271 5400
P. O. Box 434, Bruma, 2026

ISKCON Durban Child Protection Team
childprotectionoffice.org
durbancpt@gmail.com
076 719 6461

The Environment Within

Srila Prabhupada

By Nashvin Gangaram

Around fifteen years ago I gave a speech at school about the startling El Nino effects that result in severe weather patterns present at that time. To my surprise, nobody seemed to be concerned about the environment at all, despite the fact that we are completely dependent on nature for our survival. Now, the situation is different, and environmental protection is a trending topic. It is easy to understand this in light of the increasing frequency of natural disasters, like earthquakes, tsunamis, droughts and floods. In addition, everyday living conditions have also deteriorated due to air, water and noise pollution. Recently, in an attempt to reduce the level of smog (an air pollutant) there was a car ban imposed in Paris. People everywhere are now endeavouring to reduce their carbon footprint and promote recycling. But, is this enough to solve this crisis?

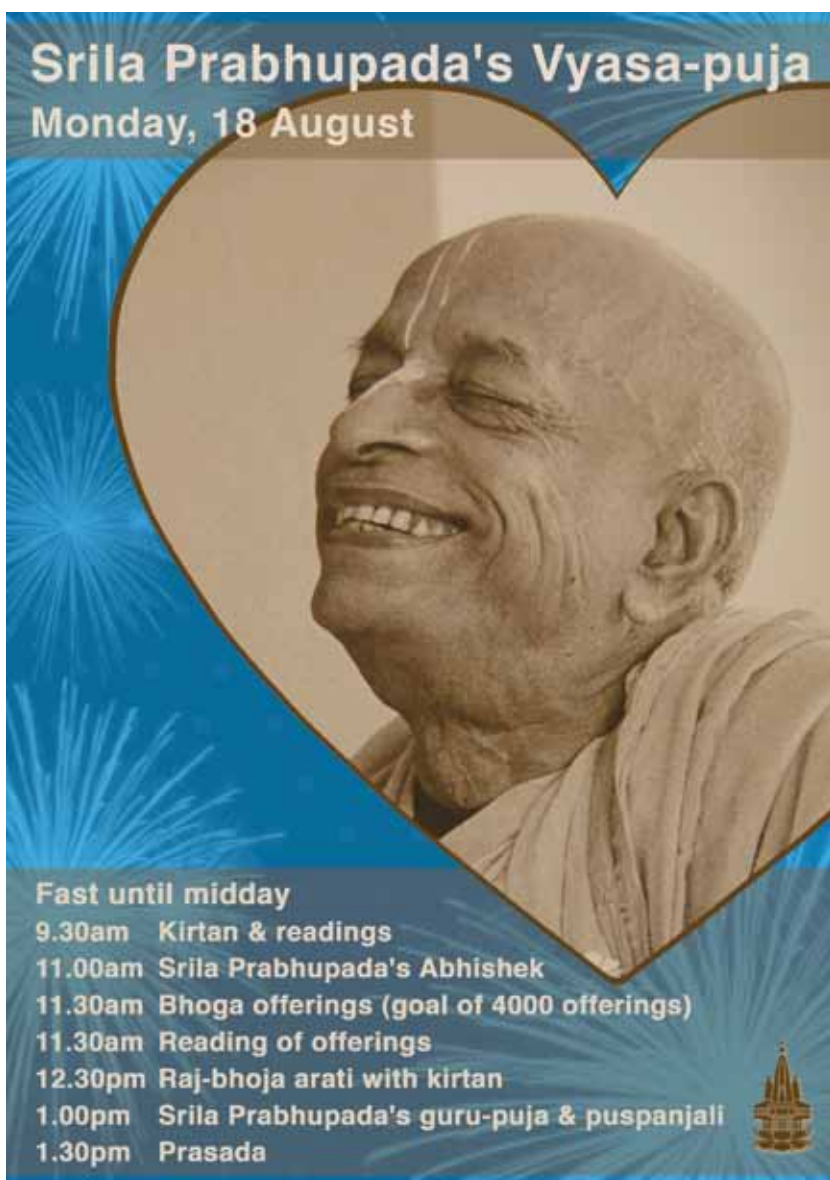
When approached by a geographer, Justin Murphy, who had ecological concerns relating to agriculture, Srila Prabhupada referred to *Bhagavad-gita* 3.14:

“All living bodies subsist on food grains, which are produced from rains. Rains are produced by performance of *yajna* [sacrifice], and *yajna* is born of prescribed duties.” In order to receive rain, sacrifice must be done to please the Lord. He further explained the sacrifice especially meant for this age, *sankirtan-yajna*, which can be easily executed, by glorifying the Lord's names, forms, activities and qualities, especially congregational chanting the holy name of the Lord. When Justin Murphy suggested that people will not be willing to perform *sankirtan* because they are too busy making money, Srila Prabhupada responded: “But what you will do with money? If there is no grain, then will you eat money?” He then explained that industrial advancement is unnecessary, because one can have a comfortable, simple life, by not acquiring excessive possessions and by living off grain from the land and milk from cows.

Why do we yearn for material things? There is dissatisfaction in our hearts, and we imagine that obtaining things will make us happy. When we engage in devotional service to please God, we become content and free from nasty desires, because

it is our natural position. *Sankirtan* cleanses the heart from material contamination, because of the pure association of Krishna. Srila Prabhupada elaborates: “A gentleman will live only in a clean place. He will not live in a polluted, contaminated place...Similarly, Lord Krishna is the supreme gentleman, and therefore He will not live in a polluted heart, nor will He appear within the polluted mind of a conditioned soul. When a devotee surrenders to Lord Krishna and becomes a lover of the Lord by direct realization of Krishna's all-attractive nature, the Lord makes His residence in the clean heart and mind of such a pure devotee.”


According to Srila Prabhupada, unless we become God conscious, there cannot be any reformation in this world. Along with external measures, like creating eco-villages and minimizing waste, we need to purify ourselves in order to see a positive change to the environment. The more our consciousness is cleansed, the fewer harmful tendencies we will have, like destruction of our surroundings to satisfy our greed for money. The only reason for our exploitative industrial development is our unfulfilled ever-expanding material cravings. When we practice devotional service and therefore become fulfilled, detrimental industries and practices will automatically diminish. We will understand that everything provided to us is a gift from God, and should therefore be utilized in His service.



Srila Prabhupada's Vyasa-puja
Monday, 18 August

Fast until midday

- 9.30am Kirtan & readings
- 11.00am Srila Prabhupada's Abhishek
- 11.30am Bhoga offerings (goal of 4000 offerings)
- 11.30am Reading of offerings
- 12.30pm Raj-bhoja arati with kirtan
- 1.00pm Srila Prabhupada's guru-puja & puspanjali
- 1.30pm Prasada



Your Temple, Our Temple, Sri Prabhupada's Family

By Rasa-sthali Dasi

Over two million visitors have walked into our temple from the time it opened in 1985 and the temple quickly went on to become a vibrant spiritual icon for Durban. Our temple is often featured in Durban Tourism brochures and recently, CNN cited it as a place to visit in Durban. Also, the temple was the recipient of a Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry Tourism Award in 2013.


Our temple opens its doors at 4:30am and closes at 9:00pm, often later for 365 days in the year. People are astounded by the beauty and serenity of the temple. Maintaining such a place of sanctuary, tourist attraction, religious festival hotspot, etc. is no easy task. And even though the greatest care is taken, the years have begun to show. The escalating costs of electricity and water have made us go back to the drawing board and come up with viable and sustainable options.

In 2015 we will celebrate our Temple's 30th anniversary and have decided to make two major offerings to the Deities, Sri Sri Radha Radhanath: to renovate the temple to its original majesty and to preserve the natural resources Krishna has given us.

Renovations have begun with waterproofing and securing the steel roof tiles. We have already replaced the smaller artworks in the temple. In the coming months we hope to paint, source and retille the exterior Italian marble wall tiles, clean and polish the steel roof tiles, redo the temple decorative resin pieces, replace the large artworks, install a new altar door and replace the door mechanism, refit the glass entrance doors, change the over 1000 light bulbs to an electricity saving option, fix the pathways, landscaping, use biodegradable packaging, upgrade Govinda's Restaurant and open a new gift shop. Recently we also did an energy audit and are implementing eco-friendly options for saving energy, like solar powered geysers, researching the reactivation of our borehole for water, composting, recycling paper and plastic, etc.

This temple is your temple, it is our temple, and by Sri Prabhupada's grace, we are all part of a spiritual family that has benefitted so much from the existence of this temple. We all have a rare opportunity to share in the repair and renovations project. You can be part of the change by sharing your wealth, contacts, and knowledge to help with the restoration. Below are sponsorship options but you are invited to help in any capacity. We have especially set up a restoration admin office. You can contact Kamala Sundari. Office hours: Tuesday to Friday, 9:00am - 1.30pm
031 403 3328

HELP RENOVATE SRI SRI RADHA RADHANATH TEMPLE



YOUR Temple | OUR Temple
SRI PRABHUPADA'S FAMILY

Swarup Damodar Das 083 778 3328
Krishna Chandra Das 074 102 7675

RESTORATION ADMIN OFFICE
Kamala Sundari Dasi
Tuesday to Friday | 9:00am - 1.30pm
031 403 3328 | temple@iskcondurban.net

OPTIONS	
GOLD	
Roof Tiles (stainless steel)	R250 per square metre
Painting (eco paint)	R200 per square metre
Exterior Wall Tiles (pink marble)	R2000 per square metre
LED bulbs	R600 for 10
TOTAL	R3051
SILVER	
Roof Tiles (stainless steel)	R250 per square metre
Painting (eco paint)	R200 per square metre
Exterior Wall Tile (pink marble — 50cm by 50cm)	R500 per tile
LED bulbs	R300 for 5
TOTAL	R1251
BRONZE	
Roof Tiles (stainless steel)	R250 per square metre
Painting (eco paint)	R200 per square metre
LED bulbs	R300 for 5
TOTAL	R751
PLATINUM	
Painting of one tower (eco paint & includes scaffolding)	R60 001

PLATINUM ELITE 1	
Upgrade of wooden gate, polishing altar gate, & mechanism	R200 001
PLATINUM ELITE 2	
Redoing temple mouldings & colour coding	R600 001
YES, I WOULD LOVE TO SPONSOR: (PLEASE TICK)	
Gold (R3051)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Silver (1251)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bronze (R751)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Platinum (R60 001)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Platinum Elite 1 (R200 001)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Platinum Elite 2 (R600 001)	<input type="checkbox"/>
NAME	<input type="text"/>
NUMBER	<input type="text"/>
EMAIL	<input type="text"/>
BANKING DETAILS	
NEDBANK	
Account Name:	ISKCON
Account Number:	1322133913
Account Type:	Current
Branch Code:	132226
Your reference	<input type="text"/>

Lord Balaram Saves The Day

By Yamuna Devi Dasi

One night, in the winter of 1995 in Vrindavan, I awoke with a burning fever and symptoms of deadly dysentery. Being a remote village situated three hours away from Delhi, Vrindavan's medical facilities in the early nineties were limited. I was restricted to Ayurvedic powders and bottles of glucose. By the tenth day of the illness, I was feeling helpless when a friend visited bringing a special gift. She covered me with a shawl that once belonged to the Deity of Lord Balaram at the Krishna Balaram Temple in Vrindavan. The next morning, although still weak, my fever broke and within a few days I made a complete recovery. After two long weeks of isolation I walked into the temple and my vision was consumed by the beautiful form of Lord Balaram, standing majestically in the centre altar. I gazed upon his glistening crystal face, his turban was bedecked with jewels, his black locks of hair and his muscular arms and holding his plough. Balaram which means supreme strength, was supporting the Supreme Lord and I realised then that he carried the weight of the entire creation upon his shoulders. Deep in my heart I knew that he had also carried the burden of my illness and given me renewed hope and life.

When we see Lord Krishna tending the cows He is always accompanied by his elder brother Balaram. Carrying a plough on his shoulder, Balaram walks ahead of Krishna. Even though He is aware of Krishna's supremacy, he is willing to fight and defeat all the demons to protect his brother. In the *Srimad*

Bhagavatam he is described as Lord Krishna's first expansion and the *adi-guru* or original spiritual master of the entire creation. Balaram then further expands Himself into Shankarshan, the hooded serpent on which Lord Vishnu lies. He is the maintainer and carrier of all universes. No one can approach Krishna without the permission of Balaram therefore, scripture recommends that one should approach him first to receive the blessings of Lord Krishna.

Just as he protects the Lord, he has the task of also protecting the devotees. For them, he becomes the carrier of their faith and the protector of their devotion. Lord Balaram helps the sincere devotee on their path by destroying the demons within and without, emerging as the restoration of hope and strength when all is diminished.

It is difficult to truly understand the opulence, limitless power and qualities of Lord Balaram. As one focuses more and more on his form and his formidable strength, his real position becomes revealed.

"These two are one and the same identity. They differ only in form. Lord Balaram is the first bodily expansion of Krishna, and he assists in Lord Krishna's transcendental pastimes." (Cc. Adi 5.5)

I remain grateful for his love and protection on my spiritual path. Unfortunately, I lost my magical shawl a few years ago but I find comfort that it remains a shelter to those in need.

Appearance Day of

LORD BALARAM

SUNDAY, 10 AUGUST

- 7.00am Srila Prabhupada's guru-puja
- 7.15am Class with His Holiness Bhakti Chaitanya Swami
- 8.00am Greeting the Deities in Their new outfit
- 11.00am Class with His Grace Subha Vilas Das
- 12.30pm Arati and kirtan
- 1.00pm Break Fast — Feast
- 4.00pm Class with His Holiness Bhakti Chaitanya Swami & His Holiness Partha Sarathi Das Goswami
- 6.00pm Light prasada



Devotion Personified

By Sharadiya Rasa Dasi

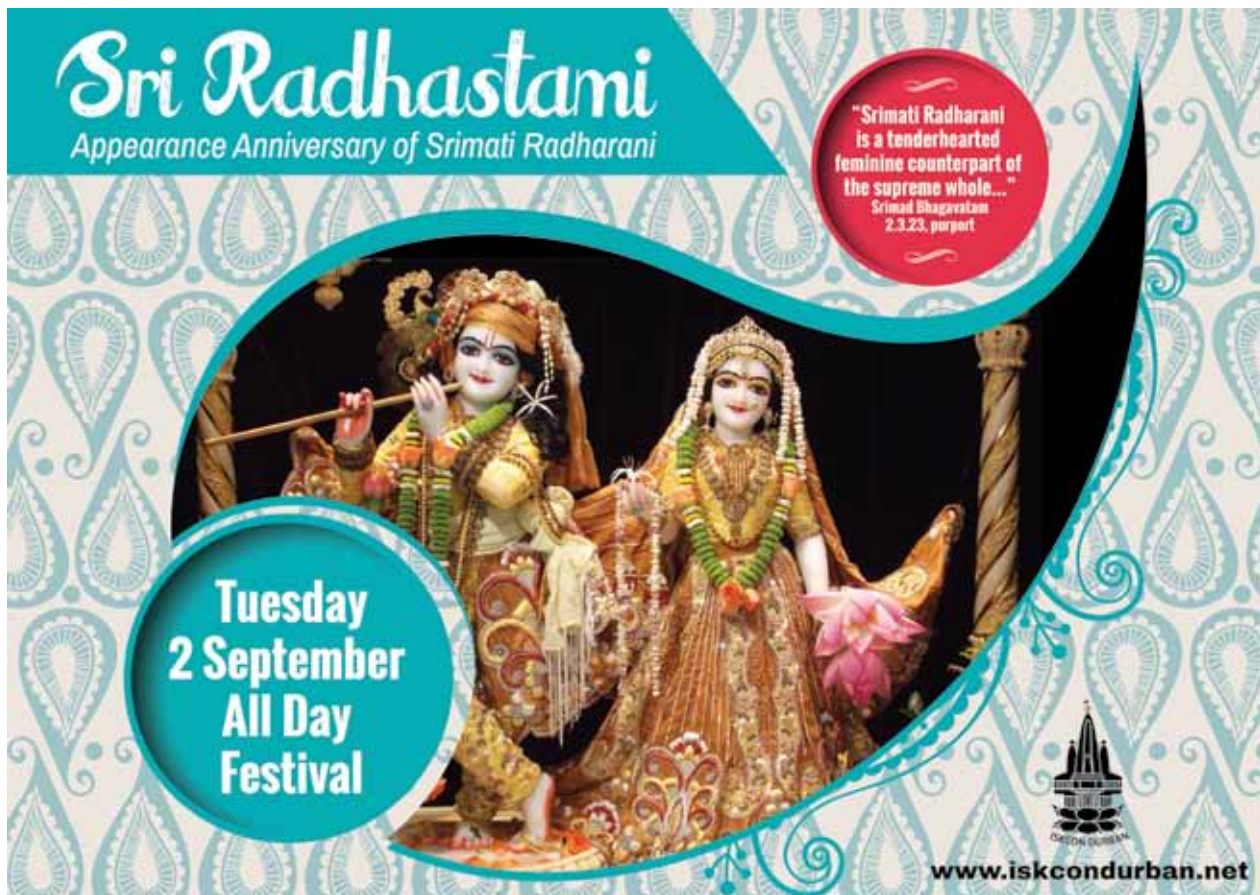
King Vrishabanu of Raval waded into the Yamuna River to bathe when he saw a golden lotus flower. In it, was a baby girl shining with the brilliance of a million suns — Srimati Radharani. He took the baby home to his wife Kirtida.

Having Srimati Radharani in the palace brought them immense joy even though they realized She was blind. Shortly after, Narada Muni appeared before the king. He advised King Vrishabanu that he should perform the auspicious birth celebrations. The festivities were grand and Nanda Maharaj attended bringing with him, baby Krishna. While Krishna was left unattended He crawled to the cradle of the baby girl and looked in.

Srimati Radharani at once opened her eyes to behold her eternal consort, Sri Krishna. Thus, resumes their transcendental pastimes in the realm of Vrindavan. These pastimes have since been the meditation of sages for millennia, the oration and devotion of devotees and the subject of artists, poets and theologians.

One of Radharani's names is Madhana Mohana Mohini, the attractor of the attracter of cupid — depicting her unique quality. Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is known as all attractive, possessing the opulence of fame, beauty, knowledge, strength, wealth, and renunciation. How amazing is it then that Srimati Radharani is able to attract the All-Attractive? Her face is often compared to lotus flowers and Her compassion, sweetness and grace are Her fine qualities. "Lord Krishna enchants the world, but Sri Radha enchants even Him. Therefore She is the supreme goddess of all." (Cc. Adi 4.95) Of all Her transcendental qualification the foremost is her devotion to Krishna.

All acts of devotion including singing, dancing, speaking, and remembering have their source in Radharani. Once while singing of Krishna's glories, the nearby stones began to melt in ecstatic love. In dance, She is known to be the "central petal of the *rasa-lila* flower." (Cc. Adi 4.81, purport) To become successful in any devotional practice we need to seek the blessing of the personification of expert devotion — Srimati Radharani. Devotion by nature is not a selfish act, and Radharani includes anyone desirous of becoming closer to Krishna. It is good etiquette to approach Radharani first before approaching Krishna. In holy places like Raval, Varshana and Vrindavan we see that the residents there have a deep understanding of this. In greetings, song and in prayer we hear them calling out "Radhe! Radhe!"



Precious diamonds remain deep within the earth, requiring great endeavour to obtain and then it needs a craftsman's cut to reveal its brilliance. Srimati Radharani is of such rarity, and Her glories lay within various secret mantras and sacred texts but it too needs the expert spiritual teacher to reveal Her brilliance. There is immense spiritual benefit for all who hear of Her. And on Her appearance anniversary there will be much celebration and discussion about Her. We can offer Her our raised hands, a song, or flowers to Her lotus feet, which are revealed only once a year at the Sri Sri Radha Radhanath Temple — on Radhastami.

Reflections of Krishna

Youth Column

By Nalayne

A most invaluable truth that I've come to understand through Krishna consciousness, is that the real relationship we have with God is one of pure and complete love. During the Bhakti Yoga Society (BYS) Winter retreat, this understanding has grown with the knowledge that we seek this love as it will bring us happiness. And we want to be happy because bliss is the true nature of our souls. *Bhakti-yoga* is the process through which we can reconnect with God and thereby attain true love and perfect happiness. Even beyond understanding this, one could actually feel the love and bliss brought by the *bhakti* process, in the atmosphere around the temple, amongst the people and throughout the retreat.

For most of us it began on the first night we arrived, welcomed by the beautiful sounds of the *mridangas*, *karatalas* and the chanting of God's names in *kirtan*. I was overcome with awe upon walking into the temple for the first time and taking in all of its beauty and that of the Deities on Their altar. Later, we were treated to a tour of the temple through which much was learnt about the thought and significance behind the structure and decor of the temple, and one could appreciate its sanctity even more. It was in this temple that we had the magical experience of *mangal-arati* each morning; the privilege of Vraja Krishna sharing his insight of Krishna consciousness; and presenting our group projects. Meeting many people who moved me with their kind-heartedness, helped me realise the importance and the honour of associating with devotees of Krishna. In addition, as the true meaning of our lives lies in serving Krishna, I deeply admire and was inspired by the people who devote themselves to spreading knowledge and love of Him as they do a great service in this. I therefore give my sincerest thanks to the facilitators of the retreat and everybody who had a hand in providing this opportunity for students of the Bhakti Yoga Society.

I am thankful to everybody who shared in this experience as it is together that we grow. This was especially evident during the realisations session. Terushka expressed her gratitude for having found the confidence to express who she truly is, and I think this is something which we all experienced. Not only due to the ease and freedom found in this environment but fundamentally because through Krishna consciousness we come to discover who we are. As was eloquently expressed by Jane, we are all reflections of Krishna. By understanding this, Mandisa can surely realise her hope of being



an instrument of love, though by Oyama's realisation that he felt the most honest love from people here, might assert that she and all of us are already exactly such instruments. We find strength in God and by sharing this with one another we can keep our faith and move forward together on our journeys. For Mitchell, as certainly for all of us, the most captivating thing was the bliss that is felt while chanting the names of God and experiencing its power, particularly when people have come together to do so.

The beach *harinam* was the highlight of the retreat for everybody and honestly the best experience that I personally have ever had. It was here that I truly felt the meaning of 'transcendental bliss' and it will be a part of my spirit's growth forever. It confirmed once again that I am in the place and space where I was meant to be. I left knowing that I have accepted this as the truth around which I hope to live, moving forward on my journey back to God, the Supreme.

The morning that the last of us were leaving was unsurprisingly sad. A few tears were shed as we wished to stay a little longer, resentful of having to return to the "real world". The ever-present *mridangas* and *karatalas* that welcomed us before sounded rather melancholy at that point. However, in typical *kirtan* style, as the music built up, so did our spirits. Very soon we found ourselves dancing ecstatically once more, and chanting the holy names of God, Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Hare Hare/ Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.

Krishna Kids Winter Retreat



“Krishna! Krishna!” swayed the tall forest trees.

“Krishna! Krishna!” yawned the sleepy deer, snuggled in the dense thicket.

“Krishna! Krishna!” cooed the cuckoos, fluttering their wings.

“Krishna! Krishna!” buzzed the bees, drinking nectar from the fragrant summer flowers.

“Krishna! Krishna!” crowed the peacocks loudly from the treetops.

“Krishna! Krishna!” cawed the green parrots, swooping over the rooftops.

“Krishna! Krishna!” mooed the cows, their large eyes savouring the sunrise.

The Cry of the Soul

Happily Ever After

By Nikunja Vilasini Dasi

The village of Vrindavan awoke with the delightful cries of the forest animals and creatures calling out to their beloved Krishna. A new day meant that they would see Him again. Yet Krishna was not eager to get up. His mother, Yashoda, tried to lure Him awake, but Krishna merely stretched out His arms, yawned, and turned to fall asleep again. Mother Yashoda was unaware that His fatigue was due to His night time rendezvous with His girlfriends, the *gopis*. She did not realize that Radharani, the leader of the *gopis* and the possessor of Krishna’s heart, kept Him awake each night along the banks of the Yamuna where they would meet. Krishna was drawn to her spotless love and her irrepressible desire to serve Him and make Him happy. He could not understand why she loved Him so much. What was so attractive in Him that made Radharani and everyone in Vrindavan mad after Him? What made Radharani risk everything to be with Him? How He wished He could taste the sweetness of her love which bound Him and made Him subservient to her.

Suddenly, Krishna realized that He was not going to miss a fun-filled day with His cowherd boyfriends and cows, so He hurriedly got ready. As He left home with them, everyone including the animals and birds stared at Him, captivated. His large hazel brown eyes tinged with red, His ruby red lips, and His locks of black hair encircling His face stole their minds. His complexion was the most attractive—a blend of blue, grey and black, tinged with the colour of a spark of lightning. His resplendent face, which resembled a fresh rain cloud, and the smile that decorated it, overwhelmed them with love and bliss.

The forest animals welcomed Him calling out His name. For the entire day they would enjoy His company while Radha and the *gopis* pined to be with Him.

More than four thousand years later, Krishna returned to Earth as Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to taste the special flavour of Radharani’s love and affection for

Him. Assuming her golden colour and blissful mood of love, He could understand everything—Krishna’s unique position as the object of Radharani’s love and the matchless taste of that love. Everyone who would see Mahaprabhu’s radiant golden form would swoon in bliss just as the residents of Vrindavan had relished Krishna’s beauty. The denizens of heaven would even disguise themselves to behold his splendid appearance. Just by seeing him, they would become intoxicated with love of God.

Wherever Gauranga Mahaprabhu went he would chant the names of Krishna and dance joyfully. His followers would do the same and they would encourage everyone they met to chant the names of Krishna. They would say, “Lord Gauranga has come to deliver the greatest treasure of love for God. With this divine treasure you will realize your spiritual identity as a pure soul, a servant of God and become free from the illusions of this world. Chant the holy names of Krishna as shown by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu! This sublime chanting pacifies *atma-krandana*, the cry of the soul. The soul cries from suffering without Krishna’s divine love. By this simple method of chanting, your real suffering will cease with love for Krishna manifesting in your heart. So take this rare treasure that Mahaprabhu has come to give and become spiritually wealthy and happy.”

Lord Krishna had heard the lost souls’ cries for help. Whether their cries were filled with fear, torment, frustration, dissatisfaction, or grief, His heart melted in compassion. But He thought what use would it be to save a drowning man’s coat instead of helping the drowning man. So Lord Krishna came in the merciful mood of Lord Chaitanya to save the soul from drowning in material existence, not just to give temporary comfort to the outer dress of the material body. He answered the real cry of the soul.

Thus, anyone who came in contact with Lord Chaitanya through his personal presence or his followers was touched by his unconditional love and compassion.

As Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu traversed the pathways during his journey to Vrindavan, he sang Krishna’s names and danced jubilantly. When he passed

through the Jarikhanda forest in South India, he was oblivious of the fierce wild animals roaming there. His servant, Balabhadra Bhattacharya, was wary of their presence. Surely they would become a meal to a lion or a tiger who would pounce upon them at any moment, he thought. But to his astonishment, the animals moved aside as the Lord made his way through the forest. One day, as Lord Gauranga was walking along the forest path in a love-maddened state, he saw a tiger lying there. Without hesitating, he touched the tiger with his feet and shouted, “Chant the holy name of Krishna!” The tiger immediately stood up and began to dance and chant, “Krishna! Krishna!” Balabhadra Bhattacharya thought that his eyes were deceiving him until on another day he witnessed a similar divine miracle. A herd of elephants came to drink water in a river where Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was bathing. They were welcomed by splashes of water from Lord Chaitanya. When the water touched their bodies, their thunderous voices filled the forest as they chanted “Krishna! Krishna!” Their joyous dancing shook the earth and some of them fell to the ground. Watching their spectacular behaviour, Balabhadra Bhattacharya was astounded yet he understood that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was none other than Radha and Krishna come to show genuine compassion to every living being.

As Chaitanya’s melodious voice penetrated the forest, the deer were drawn to his divine singing and began to follow him. The Lord patted them. As they continued to follow the Lord, five or seven tigers joined the deer and also began to follow him. Lord Chaitanya remembered the divine land of Vrindavan where there is no hunger, thirst or anger. Although naturally inimical, human beings and animals live together there in friendship and love. Chaitanya then ordered them all to chant Krishna’s names. Balabhadra Bhattacharya was struck with wonder as he witnessed the animals chanting and jumping in sublime happiness. The tigers and deer embraced and kissed one another. Lord Gauranga simply smiled as he saw the

animals become united on the spiritual platform.

When Mahaprabhu eventually reached Vrindavan and wandered in the Vrindavan forests chanting the holy names, all the animals were overjoyed to see him. The cows mooed loudly, the does approached him and licked his body, the bumblebees and birds sang loudly on the fifth note, and the peacocks danced in a spectacular display of colour. Even the trees and creepers became jubilant, shed tears in the form of honey, and offered their fruits and flowers to him as they bowed to his lotus feet.

By Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s association and benevolence, he transformed the piteous cries of the soul to euphoric cries of love just like those of the residents of Vrindavan. If our cries are like a dependent child crying for his mother or a drowning man crying for his saviour, we will attract the Lord’s attention. Still, He will answer our cries as He sees fit. After all, His intention is not to make us comfortable in this world but to permanently save us from the entanglement of material life and take us back home to His spiritual kingdom.



The animals inspired by Lord Chaitanya to chant.

Single Parents

God Conscious Parenting

By Krishangi Radhe Dasi

Most if not all parents will agree that raising a child is like an ocean voyage –full of raging storms, rough waves, and occasional sunny tranquillity. It is hard enough with a partner, but when you're doing it alone, the difficulty rises to a whole new level. The reality in the 21st century is that single-parenting is becoming more prevalent. Through death, divorce, a parent working abroad, a child born out of wedlock, whatever the reason maybe, single-parenting has now received the nod within society but remains not only a challenge for the parent but for the child alike.

Being in the education profession, I see many grand-parents or other relatives attending parent-teacher meetings at school. We always offer acknowledgment and appreciation as this is encouraging to see the extended family providing such love and care for the child. Although African culture presents the age-old adage: It takes a village to raise a child; Vedic culture has imbibed this mood and understanding presented in scripture over five thousand years ago.

In Krishna's childhood pastimes, the entire village of Vrindavan came together to celebrate his birth

through the Nandotsav festival hosted by Nanda Maharaja. The elderly *gopis* and *gopas* took all the children of Vrindavan as their own. Therefore, the idea of a joint family that extends outside the nuclear unit has been widely practiced and encouraged in Vedic literature. The spiritual world of Vrindavan is nothing but family life. Everyone has relationships of love and trust centred on service to Krishna.

Today, we find several benefits of maintaining the joint family unit. Children who are deprived of the love and care of the parents, enjoy the priceless jewels of guidance through the wisdom and support of grand-parents and the extended family unit. Single-parents can see this as an opportunity to engage with relatives, spiritual masters and mentors by advice and help offered.

Characters in Vedic scripture can be admired for their strong will, devotion to family and *dharma*. Queen Kunti is the mother of the great Pandava brothers. After the death of her husband Pandu, she was an exemplary single parent. The *Mahabharat* explains that Kunti underwent great suffering throughout her life, yet she remained steadfast in her devotion. Despite all her troubles she always sought Krishna's shelter. In fact, when her sons regained their lost kingdom, Kunti prayed for more calamities: "I wish that all those calamities would happen again and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths." (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.8.25)

Kunti used the challenges she faced as a reason to remember Krishna and pray to Him for His continued guidance. Not everyone can pray like Kunti, but we can use her example to face the challenges of each daunting day by gaining strength through extended family, through prayer and by opening our hearts to the devotees who offer love and care. The idea is to always remember that children are gifts from God, and for us be resilient in our service to Krishna.

We also find numerous examples within the Islamic tradition of single parents who raised children to become strong individuals. Hajra, Maryam and Amina all raised their sons alone due to different circumstances.

Ultimately, when we focus on God as being the supreme father, and care-giver we understand that we are not alone. Make time for yourself to meditate, exercise, eat and sleep properly. It is certainly not selfish to spend time on hobbies that you enjoy, ultimately if you do not take care of yourself, you will not be able to care for anyone else - single or not.



Queen Kunti offering prayers to Krishna.

Knocking on "Atheism's Door"

Vedic Observer

By Venu Gopal Das

Due to work requirements, over the past year I have had to interact, Facebook friend and meet numerous national representatives from across the globe. Every person I have met from a third world country strongly believes in God. In contrast amongst the Americans and Canadians, I can safely say that more than 95% of them are openly atheistic. Prior to this I have only met four atheists in my entire life. From the United States there was only one girl who is a believer and perhaps three of them are agnostic. Last Easter Sunday a Canadian co-worker posted on Facebook "Happy Zombie Jesus Day"...Initially I wasn't disturbed by his freedom of speech but was mortified when I noticed he got 130 likes. This provoked me to examine the reach and reality of atheism in contemporary society.



In the Twelfth Canto of the *Srimad Bhagavatam* (12.3.43), Sukadeva Gosvami explains that, "In the age of Kali peoples' intelligence will be diverted by atheism, and they will almost never offer sacrifice to the Supreme Personality of Godhead." He goes on to say that in this Age of Deterioration, religious morals will dissipate as leaders will be irreligious and so too their rules and regulations.

Within my work contract and under Japanese immigration law; it clearly stipulates that I am not allowed to promote any religious beliefs at work, social media, in the presence of co-workers or in public; (privately I have liberty to practice as I please), however atheistic views can be boldly declared as no such clause exists. In the United Kingdom, a country that is in essence Christian, a new law will be passed where nothing Christian can be mentioned at the workplace; the age old morning prayers we all recited in school have long been removed. There have even been cases that reached labour dispute courts in which Christians were fired for wearing their Crucifix pendants. Amongst the Americans (Canada and the USA), I have noticed that acknowledging the belief in God is a sign of weakness, and something that you will clearly be ridiculed over at some point.

In the Nineties the atheists would ask for proof of the existence of God, the soul and spiritual phenomenon. The current generation doesn't even bother trying to investigate or engage in some thought process before deciding to commit to their beliefs. Empirical reasoning and other such methods formerly used to

try to disprove the existence of God are not even a concern. Appropriately another prediction is that as Kali-yuga progresses the intelligence of mankind will decrease. I'm certain if I investigate this topic further the results will be similar to the descriptions predicted in the Vedas.

It is obvious that not everyone in these developed countries practice atheism, but it is apparent that it is becoming increasingly popular, especially amongst the younger generations. More worrying is the fact that they enthusiastically accept this belief system without much thought. As developing countries we need to look to the first world for economic opportunities. They will continue to influence us on various levels for the longest of time. Majority of human ethics, laws and morals are created by the influence of religion.

Can you imagine what the world will look like if these gradually disappear? It's easy if you try...

But you don't need to possess the observational skills of a scientist to verify that this is truly the Age of Deterioration. Even with all our technological advances; disease, genocide, inequality, starvation and war still run rampant. If you can accept these predictions in the Vedas describing Kali-yuga to be true, why not also accept the remedies it suggests to overcome such sufferings and tribulations...

Janmashtami
Seva

Help feed over 50 000 worshippers

**A wonderful service
to Krishna
on His birthday.**

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For details please contact
Balaram Das 082 881 4521

Hare Krishna Temple, Chatsworth presents

Women's Day Tea Party

Spend a morning with us in
Laughter, Love, Leisure & Enlightenment

Saturday, 9 August
9:30am - 1:30pm

Dress to Impress
Photo Shoot
Empowerment Talk &
Dance Lesson with Kumari Ambigay
Playwright & Comedian Jaioshni Naidoo
Celebration of the Vedic Goddess Tradition
Vedic Fashion Show
Games & Prizes
Raffle

Limited Seats | Booking Essential | Free
RSVP 083 9505 111 no later than Thursday, 7 August



Vaishnava Calendar

7 Aug Th	Ekadasi Radha Govinda Jhulana Yatra begins
8 Aug Fr	Break fast 06:35 - 07:21 Srila Rupa Gosvami - Disappearance
10 Aug Su	Jhulana Yatra ends Lord Balarama — Appearance (Fast till noon) Second month of Chaturmasya begins (yogurt fast for one month)
11 Aug Mo	Srila Prabhupada's departure for the USA
17 Aug Su	Sri Krishna Janmashtami (Fast till midnight)
18 Aug Mo	Nandotsava Srila Prabhupada — Appearance (Fast till noon)
21 Aug Th	Ekadasi
22 Aug Fr	Break fast 06:22 - 08:57
30 Aug Sa	Srimati Sita Thakurani — Appearance
2 Sep Tu	Radhastami: Appearance of Srimati Radharani (Fast till noon)
5 Sep Fr	Ekadasi (Fast till noon for Vamanadeva)
6 Sep Sa	Break fast 06:05 - 09:58 Appearance of Lord Vamanadeva (Today is feast) Srila Jiva Gosvami — Appearance

7 Sep Su	Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura — Appearance (Fast till noon)
8 Sep Mo	Srila Haridasa Thakura — Disappearance
9 Sep Tu	Acceptance of sannyasa by Srila Prabhupada Third month of Chaturmasya begins (milk fast for one month)
15 Sep Mo	Srila Prabhupada's arrival in the USA
19 Sep Fr	Ekadasi
20 Sep Sa	Break fast 05:48 - 09:49
1 Oct We	Durga Puja
4 Oct Sa	Ramacandra Vijayotsava Srila Madhvacarya — Appearance
5 Oct Su	Ekadasi Disappearance of: Srila Raghunatha Das Gosvami Srila Raghunatha Bhatta Gosvami Srila Krisnadas Kaviraja Gosvami
6 Oct Mo	Break fast 05:28 - 09:39
8 Oct We	First Day of Kartik Srila Krishna Saradiya Rasayatra Srila Murari Gupta — Disappearance Laksmi Puja Fourth month of Chaturmasya begins (urad dal fast for one month)

Krishna Janmashtami Hall Programmes 2014

Date	Time	Area	Venue
29 July	Tue 19:00	Reservoir Hills	Seva Samaj Hall
2 Aug	Sun 17:30	Chatsworth, Arena Park	Aryan Benevolent Home
2 Aug	Sun TBC	Port Shepstone	Andra Hall, Marburg
2 Aug	Sun 17:30	Sarnia Pinetown	Pinetown Civic Hall
2 Aug	Sun 16:00	Welbedacht East	Sarva Dharma Ashram
8 Aug	Fri 19:00	Chatsworth, Unit 9/11	TBA
9 Aug	Sat 18:00	Clare Estate	Shaligram Hall
9 Aug	Sat 14:30	Estcourt	Swami Sahajananda Community Hall
9 Aug	Sat 14:00	Glencoe	5 Sastri Road, Glencoe
11 Aug	Mon TBC	Stanger	Hanuman Bhakti Group
12 Aug	Tues 19:00	Lotus Park	Lotus Park Community Hall
14 Aug	Thurs TBC	Stanger	Stanger Sanathan Mundhal
15 Aug	Fri 18:30	Mid South Coast	Scottsburgh Town Hall
15 Aug	Fri 18:30	Newlands	Hillgrove Hall
15 Aug	Fri TBC	Stanger	Stanger Sabah Hall
15 Aug	Fri 18:30	Tongaat	Gokul Hall
15 Aug	Fri 18:30	Verulam	Day Care Centre
16 Aug	Sat Evening	Pietermaritzburg	ISKCON PMB
17 Aug	Sun 12:30	Northdene	Northdene Santh Hall, Nirvana Hills



a - 6	h - 1	o - 19	v - 22
b - 18	i - 9	p - 5	w - 7
c - 25	j - 11	q - 13	x - 26
d - 12	k - 2	r - 23	y - 10
e - 4	l - 3	s - 24	z - 15
f - 21	m - 20	t - 16	
g - 14	n - 17	u - 28	

Young Vaishnavas Column

By Anjinee Rampershad

Each letter of the alphabet has a number. To unravel the words you need to "crack the code". Here is an example:

5 23 6 18 1 28 5 6 12 6
p r a b h u p a d a

You can use this code to send a message to your friend or a message to Krishna on His upcoming birthday.

Codes

- 2 23 9 24 1 17 6
- 12 4 22 19 16 4 4
- 22 6 24 28 12 4 22 6
- 9 24 2 25 19 17
- 10 6 24 1 19 12 6
- 18 6 3 6 23 6 20
- 11 6 17 20 6 24 16 6 20 9
- 21 3 28 16 4
- 22 23 9 17 12 6 22 6 17
- 21 19 23 4 24 16
- 25 1 6 17 16 9 17 14
- 24 5 9 23 9 16 24 19 28 3

Krishna Janmashtami

Gita Week

11-16 August | 6:30pm-8:30pm
by Author of "Sun Prince"
His Grace Subha Vilas Das (India)

Deity Offerings

11-15 August | 6pm-8:30pm
16-17 August | 9:30am-8:30pm
Incense, ghee lamps, fruit,
flowers & abhishek

Vedic Arts & Culture Festival

Learners: Friday, 15 August
8am-12pm
Seniors: Saturday, 16 August
11am-1pm

Sunday, 17 August

All day offerings
Enthralling Cultural Entertainment
Main Stage | 11am-12:30pm

Under the Stars
Bring a cushion or blanket
for spiritual movies & talks
at the amphitheatre | 7pm

Midnight Arati
Temple Room & projected
on screen in main marquee

Saturday, 16 August

Bangladesh Market Festival
9am-3pm | On-site Temple
Public Offerings Welcome
Kirtan & Free Prasada

Krishna's Birthday Party for Children
Marquee on the Lawn | 2pm-5pm

Krishna's Talent Contest
Main Stage | 3pm
Group/solo categories in dance,
drama, song, poetry & music
www.iskcondurban.net to enter
Exciting Prizes

Cultural Entertainment
Main Stage | 5pm

Janmashtami Journey
A Magical Adventure for Children
Temple amphitheatre | 6pm

Park & Ride – A shuttle service will be available from the City Treasurer's Office parking (opposite Chatsworth Centre). Saturday—2pm-8pm & Sunday—1pm-12.30pm



www.iskcondurban.net | 031 403 3328 | temple@iskcondurban.net

Celebrations also at ISKCON Centres: Ladysmith, Newcastle, Phoenix, Pietermaritzburg