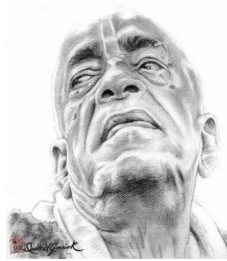


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ISKCON Sannyasa Ministry Newsletter

“To act in Krsna consciousness is the duty of every living entity because all are constitutionally part and parcel of the Supreme. The parts of the body work for the satisfaction of the whole body. The limbs of the body do not act for self-satisfaction but for the satisfaction of the complete whole. Similarly, the living entity who acts for the satisfaction of the supreme whole and not for personal satisfaction is the perfect sannyasi, the perfect yogi.” (Bhagavad-gita, 6.1, Purport)



From the Sannyasa Minister:

Welcome to volume 5 of the Sannyasa Newsletter. I would like to congratulate those who have been accepted by the GBC to take sannyasa this year. I would also like to remind those who are taking sannyasa, that as Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu has said, our only true identity is the servant of Lord Krishna's servants. In ISKCON we take sannyasa to have more opportunities for service, not to seek for opportunities to be served. Maya is always there to try to trick us and have us believe that somehow we can enjoy this material world. Only pure devotional service with humility and complete knowledge under the guidance of guru and Krishna can save us.

In this issue, we find instructions that Srila Prabhupada gave on sannyasa to Bhakti Caru Swami. There is also a report on the sannyasa seminar given in Mayapur this year as well as a sannyasi profile about Guru Prasad Swami.

Your servant,
Prahlanananda Swami



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Website:

www.sannyasacandidates.com

Email (Secretary):

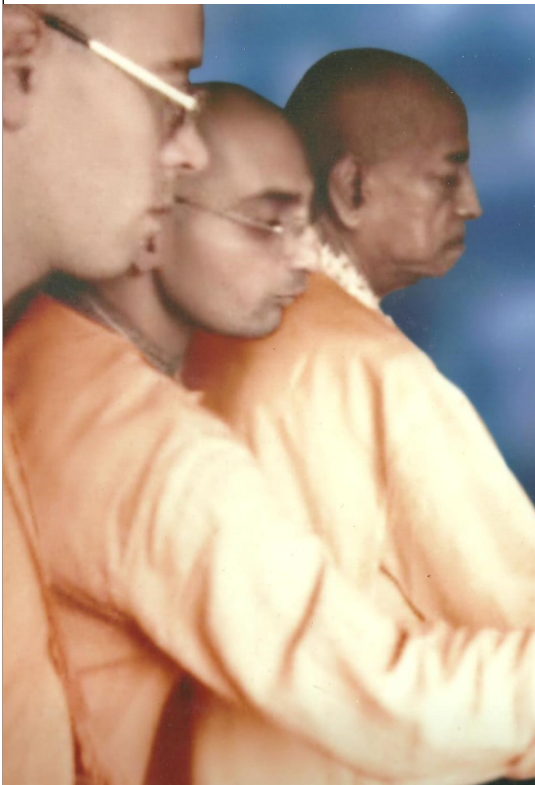
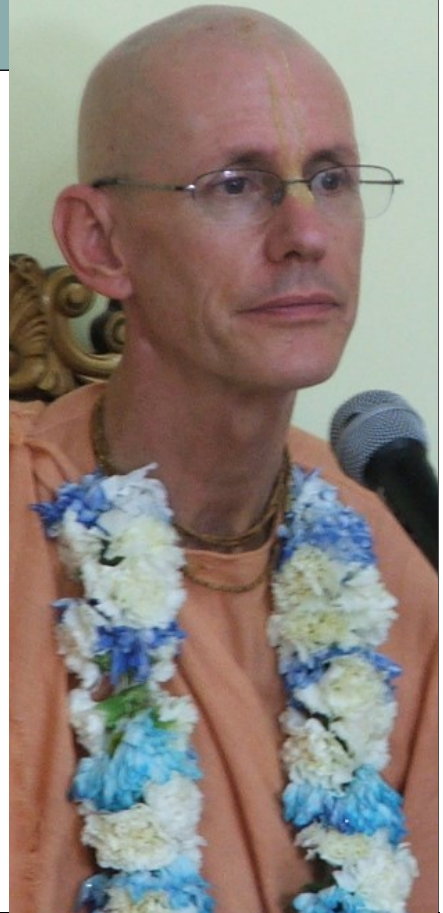
brajsunderdas@gmail.com

PROFILE: GURU PRASAD SWAMI

Guru Prasad Swami was born in the USA and studied nuclear physics at Purdue University. After transferring to the University of Texas, he made contact with the Hare Krishna movement.

Upon concluding his military service, Guru Prasad Swami joined a pioneering group of Krishna devotees in Central America stationed in San José, Costa Rica. He attended the 1976 Mayapur-Vrindavan festival and was initiated by Srila Prabhupada there. He received sannyasa initiation in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil in 1982.

Guru Prasad Swami's early contribution in ISKCON Costa Rica centered on administrative services and distributing BBT publications beginning in 1975 in the USA and from 1976-1978 in Central America. He became the temple president of Costa Rica temple in 1978, and then began traveling around Latin America, opening new temples, establishing worship centers and collaborating in diverse administrative services. In 1987 he became a member of the GBC with zonal assignments in the Tucson area of Arizona, and Mexico. He is co-zonal secretary for El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Belize, Costa Rica, Nicaragua,



Higher Taste By Bhakti Caru Swami

The following is an excerpt from "Ocean of Mercy" (Page 184-185), a new book by Bhakti Caru Swami, where he recalls his memories of Srila Prabhupada.

Later that afternoon, Tamal Krishna Maharaja took dictation from Srila Prabhupada and then went to his office next door. I remained by Prabhupada's bed chanting. "Srila Prabhupada," I asked, "according to the scriptures there are four stages of sannyasa – *kuticaka*, *bahudaka*, *parivrajaka* and *paramahansa*. Why don't we follow that standard?"

Srila Prabhupada replied, “Our sannyasa is meant for offering our body, mind and words in the service of Sri Krishna – our entire existence is offered in spreading His glory. Preaching is the purpose of our sannyasa - not liberation. That is the difference between the *eka-danda* sannyasa and *tri-danda* sannyasa. The three *dandas* indicate body, mind and words – *kaya mana*, and *vakya*. That means all activities of the body, mind and speech should be engaged in serving Krishna. No other business.

“Now that you have become a sannyasi, you are a guru. You can initiate. But as long as the spiritual master is present on the planet, one does not give initiation. That is the formality.” I did not know what to say. Finally I got my wits together and told him, “Srila Prabhupada, I always want to remain your disciple. That is all I want”.

“Yes,” he said gently, “That is the right attitude.”

The next day as I was sitting in front of Prabhupada when he had us finished breakfast, he instructed me, “Sannyasa means becoming completely free from all material attachments. A sannyasi does not have any attraction for anything in this material nature – *na dhanam na janam na sundarim*. *Sundarim*, the attraction for beautiful women, is the most difficult one to overcome. However, a sannyasi is completely free from that attraction. Even if he is alone on an island with the most beautiful woman, he should not be attracted to her – he should not be agitated at all by sex desire.” I said, “in some *sampradayas* [spiritual lineages], sannyasis are forbidden to even look at a woman.”

“No,” Srila Prabhupada corrected, “that is not the way to overcome sex desire. They may not look at the face of a woman, but if someday by chance they do, they will become attracted. Just like Visvamitra Muni. For so many years he performed austerities, totally absorbed in meditation, withdrawing his senses from the objects of the senses. But one day Indra sent an *apsara* [a heavenly courtesan], Menaka, to break his meditation. All his senses were withdrawn, but when Menaka started to dance in front of him, the sound of her ankle bells entered though his ear holes, his meditation broke, and he opened his eyes and became enchanted by her beauty. Therefore, just trying not to look at a woman will not work.”

“Then how can one overcome this overwhelming attraction?” I asked.

Prabhupada replied - “By developing the higher taste. That is the only way to overcome this attraction. *Param drstva nivartate* – by getting the higher taste, developing one’s attachment to Krishna. When one develops that attachment, even the thought of sex becomes disgusting to him. Just as Yamunacarya mentioned, ‘Now that my mind has become attached to the lotus feet of Krishna, when the thought of sex comes to my mind my lips curl in distaste and I spit at the thought.’

“That is how wonderful Krishna Consciousness is. When one develops his love for Krishna, he realises that all the beauty of a woman is meant for Krishna’s enjoyment.”

Sannyasa Seminar 2017

Krishna Kshetra Swami

The number of sannyasis grows from year to year in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, to well over 100; and those who take the vows of this final ashram of renunciation are, since recently, receiving formal training over and above what they receive individually in the course of their devotional lives and through the guidance of their sannyasa mentors. In pursuit of this aim of formal training, on February 18 – 22 we held a Sannyasa Candidate Training Seminar in Sridham Mayapur, with some 30 sannyasa candidates—all senior brahmacaris or vanaprasthas—attending. This was the second time such a program has taken place.



The daily program of the Seminar, which I facilitated under the direction of Prahladananda Swami (the Sannyasa Minister), included discussions on a variety of topics related to the life and culture of sannyasa. To help in this effort, we had several qualified guest speakers, each focusing on different subjects.

On the first day, Bhakti Vinoda Swami (based in Kerala, South India) spoke to the candidates. After telling of his own journey to sannyasa, he elaborated on the story of how it transpired that Sri Ramanujacarya (whose 1000-year appearance anniversary is celebrated this year) took sannyasa. He also emphasized the importance for ISKCON sannyasis to understand their relationship to the ISKCON institution and to welcome the increased service and responsibilities the candidates will be called upon to take up as sannyasis.

The next day featured Yadunandana Swami (based in Spain), who presented and discussed contents of his hot-off-the-press book *The Lives and Challenges of Vaishnava Sannyasis in Modernity: A study of the renounced order in ISKCON*. This 423-page book is a revised and expanded version of Yadunandana Swami's M.A. dissertation, which he wrote for his Master's degree at the University of Wales Trinity St. David, in the United Kingdom. Each candidate received a free copy of the book, as a "textbook" for the training seminar.

On the third day we heard from two guest speakers. First was Mahatma Prabhu (based in Mayapur) - a grhastha - speaking on the importance for sannyasis to know how to preach for householders' genuine spiritual benefit without inappropriately and prematurely

directing them toward renunciation. In the afternoon, we heard from Bhakti Marga Swami (based in Canada), who enlivened the devotees with his rich account of his own journey to the sannyasa ashram as well as descriptions of his well-known long-distance walks (including several walks across Canada). He also led us in a discussion about the Seven Purposes of ISKCON and how it is imperative for sannyasis in ISKCON to uphold and promote them.

On the fourth day Bhakti Vijnana Goswami (based in Russia) came and addressed the sannyasa candidates on the need for inner cultivation and the danger of neglecting such cultivation for sannyasis. We also heard from sannyasa candidates Mahadyuti Prabhu (based in Russia; who has since then received sannyasa initiation as Mahadyuti Swami), and from Vijaya Prabhu (based in the U.S.A), on subjects close to their hearts that pertain to successful practice of sannyasa.

On the final day, after I led a discussion on the multiple roles of sannyasis in our Society and then another discussion on how sannyasis can effectively deal with any toxic emotions that may arise in themselves, we had our final guest speaker—neither a sannyasi nor a male householder, but rather a Vaisnavi, H. G. Malati Prabhvi (based in the U.S.A.). Malati spoke on the rare opportunity we have to loyally serve the Founder-Acarya of ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada; she stressed the importance of understanding and imbibing his mood of self-sacrifice for the mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu to spread Krishna consciousness throughout the world.

From several of the sannyasa candidates who attended the seminar we received very favorable comments, expressing appreciation that they found the sessions substantially enriching to their understanding of the sannyasa way of life they will be committing themselves to for the remainder of their lives. Thus we see this initiative as an important step in the right direction of serving ISKCON and the Vaisnava community with qualified renunciant preachers who are well balanced and thoughtful in their practice and presentation of Krishna consciousness.



NEW SANNYASIS FOR ISKCON

In February, Mahadyuti Prabhu received sannyasa initiation from Kavichandra Swami in Sri Mayapur Dham. His sannyasa name is Mahadyuti Swami.

In March, Akincana Prabhu received sannyasa initiation from Bhakti Gaurava Narayan Swami in ISKCON Vrindavan. His sannyasa name is Bhaktijivana Vrajananda Swami.

In March, Subhag Swami awarded sannyasa initiation to Hari Dasa Prabhu in Jagannath Mandir, Rajapur. His sannyasa name is Bhakti Ananda Hari Dasa Goswami.

On Gaura Purnima day, Markandeya Rsi Prabhu received sannyasa initiation from Jayapataka Swami in Sridham Mayapur . His sannyasa name is Bhakti Mukunda Swami. On the same day, Rupa Raghunatha Prabhu received sannyasa initiation from Lokanatha Swami. He is now Rupa Raghunatha Swami.

2017 Sannyasa Waiting List

As of the GBC Meetings 2017, the following are the candidates for sannyasa along with their respective waiting periods:

Adi Purusa Das (Bhubaneswar, India)	1 year
Adhokshaja Das (Russia)	5 years
Adwaitacharya Das (Bhubaneswar, India)	Sannyasa this year
Akincana Das (Odisha, India)	Sannyasa this year
Ananda Vardhana Das (Baltics/Finland/Europe)	1 year
Asim Krishna Das (India)	3 years
Asit Krsna Das (India/Hong Kong/China/Taiwan)	Sannyasa this year
Bhaktipada Das (New Vraja Dhama, Hungary)	1 year
Deva Deva Das (South America)	1 year
Eklavya Das (India/Middle East/North America)	1 year
Gargamuni Das (Fiji)	5 years
Gaura Chandra Das (Mayapur)	1 year
Gopendra Das (Vrindavan, India)	5 years
Govindananada Das (West Bengal, India)	5 years
Hari Das (Manipur, India)	Sannyasa this year
Kamalalochan Das (Mumbai, India)	4 years
Madhu Sevita Das (Italy/France/Benelux)	1 year

2017 Sannyasa Waiting List

Mahadyuti Das (Europe/Russia/South America)	Sannyasa this year
Mahaprabhu Das (Hungary/Romania)	1 year
Markandeya Risi (Malaysia)	Sannyasa this year
Navadvip Dvija Gouranga Das (Bangladesh)	2 years
Premadata Das (Italy/India)	2 years
Pritivardhana Das (Mayapur, India)	2 years
Puspashila Shyama Das (Bangladesh)	1 year
Radhashyamsunder Das (Vrindavan, India)	4 years
Raghava Pandit Das (Delhi, India)	2 years
Rupa Raghunatha Das (Europe/South America/India)	Sannyasa this year
Santa Nrisimha Das (Jaipur, India)	2 years
Sundarlala Das (Mauritius)	3 years
Sutapa Das (United Kingdom)	5 years
Vanamali Das (Mumbai, India)	4 years
Venudhari Das (Mayapur, India)	3 years
Vishvasvasu Das (Germany/Baltics/Russia)	3 years
Vrindavanchandra Das (Vrindavan India)	2 years