

SWEET SWAN TALK

Śrīmad Bhakti Ballabh Tīrtha Mahārāja, ācārya of the Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, glorifies His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of ISKCON.

Pure devotion acknowledges no technique, while humility and absolute surrender are the stage on which the drama of divine love is eternally performed. His Divine Grace had such humility, such surrender, although he was at the same time often very demanding, insisting on a high standard from his disciples. His assertiveness was all on behalf of Godhead and therefore justified. It was an example of the dynamic face of humility, not an abstract, sterile humility, but the concrete and productive humility of doing God’s bidding.

Śrīla Prabhupāda came to America in 1965 as “an aggressor.” Aggression against illusion is the highest service to humanity. The cost of this war is absolute humility, for souls in this world are often less than thankful, unaware as they are of their own self-interest. The reward, however, is great. It is the dignity of the soul. This was the work of His Divine Grace: to bring dignity to all souls, and he did so with all of the humility at his command. It has been said that what Mohammed did with the sword, what Christianity did with wealth, he did with a humble heart – inundating the entire planet with love of God. The day will come when all men, women, and children from all races, countries and creeds will sing his praise.

For twelve years, beginning in 1965 until he disappeared from mortal vision in 1977, His Divine Grace circled the globe transplanting onto foreign soil what was thought by many to be an Indian religion. He demonstrated practically that Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is not a product of a particular culture, but the drama of the soul. He took the living conception of what he called Kṛṣṇa consciousness and extended its life beyond what the greatest Gauḍīya thinkers and practitioners of the time imagined even remotely possible. Deep realization lies within the ability to adapt the spiritual reality to diverse material circumstances, making it accessible to one and all. This is the work of an *ācārya*, who teaches both by precept and example. The *ācārya* is not frozen in time. He is melted in love of Godhead, and flows without restriction to anyone and everyone who shows even the slightest interest in pure devotion. This was the work of His Divine Grace. He left a legacy of love, not law, for any and all of his immediate followers to embrace and continue.

Who was His Divine Grace? Founder Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, father, friend, and *śaktyāveśa-avatāra* (empowered incarnation of a particular potency of God), *nityānandāveśa*, the empowerment of Śrīpad Nityānanda Prabhu. The inner truth of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s eternal form and personality will forever remain concealed to those who fail to embrace not merely the form, but the substance of all that he taught and all that he exemplified. The *darśana* (spiritual revelation) of his inner identity is his prerogative. May His Divine Grace mercifully bestow that most precious vision upon all who follow him with steadfast intelligence.