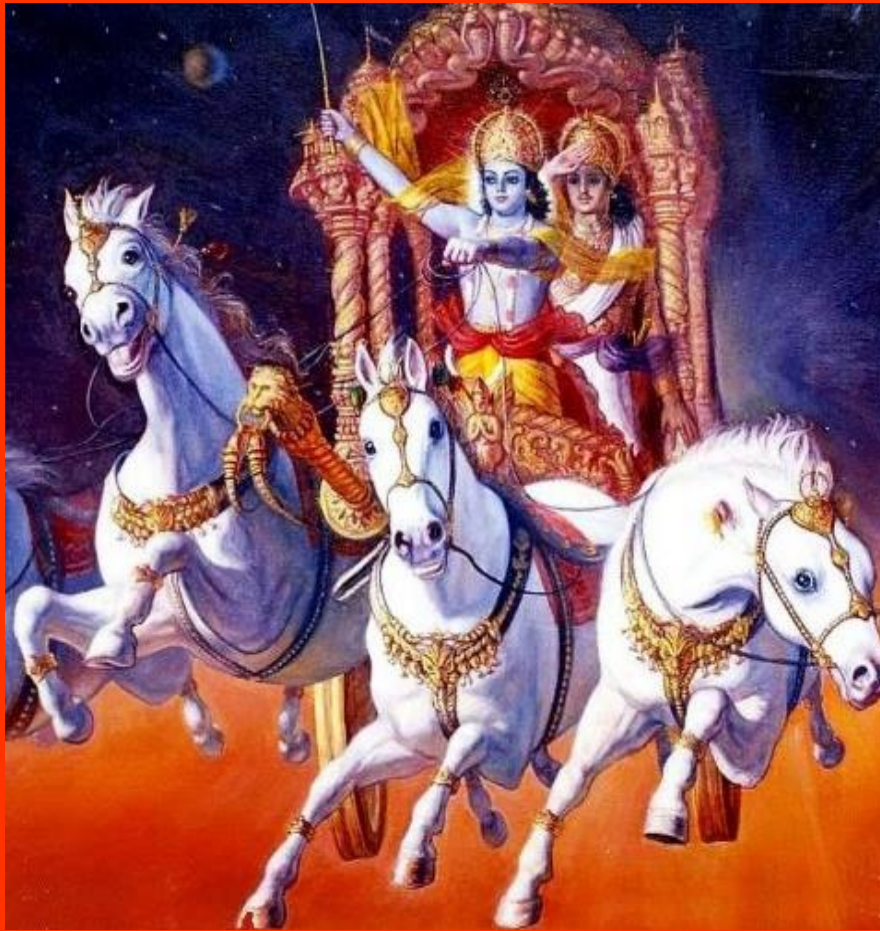


# Inspire

Local updates & spiritual articles



Krishna is *Partha-sarathi*, Arjuna's charioteer on the battlefield

## Gita Jayanti

On 3rd December we commemorate the advent of *Bhagavad-gita* (the song of God). It was first spoken by Krishna in human society two million years ago but over time the essential message was lost. Five thousand years ago, just before the beginning of the famous battle of Kuruksetra, Lord Krishna re-spoke it to His friend Arjuna.

*Bhagavad-gita* is the most widely known *Vedic* scripture in the world. Regular reading of the Bhagavad-gita gives spiritual strength and guides the conditioned soul on the path of advancement towards full Krishna consciousness.

ISKCON Belfast December 2022



## This month



3<sup>rd</sup> December  
Gita Jayanti



12<sup>th</sup> December  
Disappearance day of  
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta  
Sarasvati Thakura

Liquid Beauty  
by Hg Aditya Varna devi dasi

Damodara-arati  
house programmes

International Society for Krishna  
Consciousness. Founder Acarya His  
Divine Grace AC Bhaktivedanta  
Swami Prabhupada.



## A short history of the famous Battle of Kuruksetra

Over five thousand years ago in Haryana, India, a powerful king named Vichitraviya passed away. Because his eldest son Dhritarastra had been blind since birth he was unfit to rule so his younger son Pandu inherited the kingdom. After Pandu's death his five sons, known as the Pandavas, became the lawful inheritors of the kingdom. But since the boys were still young Dhritarashtra, who himself had one hundred sons, known as the Kauravas, took over the throne.

When the Pandavas came of age and were ready to rule the kingdom, they agreed to share it with their cousins so the kingdom was divided in two. Duryodana, the eldest of the Kauravas, was not satisfied with his share because he wanted to rule the entire kingdom. He made several attempts to kill the Pandavas but due to Lord Krishna's intervention, he was unsuccessful. The Pandavas requested just five villages, one for each brother but Duryodana said he "*would not give them enough land to stick a pin into.*" He then took possession of the entire kingdom and forced the Pandavas into exile. Lord Krishna pleaded for a peaceful settlement but Duryodana rejected Krishna's proposal.

A great fratricidal war was thus inevitable.

In preparation for the war, Duryodana and Arjuna both approached Krishna for help. Krishna offered them the choice of either His entire army or Himself as an advisor; they could decide themselves. Duryodana immediately chose Krishna's army and Arjuna wanted his friend Krishna on his side so he was pleased when Krishna became his advisor and charioteer. When the armies had assembled on the battlefield, Arjuna asked Krishna to drive their great chariot, drawn by white horses, into the midst of the two parties so that he could see who was present. The soft-hearted Arjuna, seeing so many family members, teachers and friends present, faced a dilemma – whether to fight for dharma and kill his relatives or leave the battlefield and let his evil cousins take the land that rightfully belonged to his saintly brother Yudhistira.

Arjuna spoke to Krishna, presenting many reasons why he shouldn't fight. The *Bhagavad-gita* consists of Krishna's response to Arjuna. He tells Arjuna that he is thinking on the mundane platform. He must start to see things from a transcendental point of view and do his duty.

*Bhagavad-gita* answers the all-important questions; Who are we and why are we here? Who is God and what is our relationship with Him? Why do we suffer? Is there life after death? Is there life on other planets? How do we become happy and remain happy in this and the next life? We also hear

a brief description of the spiritual world and information on how to reach it. Krishna makes it clear that we belong there with Him.

*Jyotisar Tirtha* at Kuruksetra, where the battle was fought, is now a pilgrimage site with a monument of Krishna as the chariot driver and Arjuna as the warrior on the chariot.

Those who begin to question why they are suffering or where they came from and where they shall go after death, are proper students for understanding Bhagavad-gītā." *Srila Prabhupada. Introduction to Bhagavad-gita.*

"Read Bhagavad-gita, at least a few verses every day and think about them throughout the day. The best thing is to read one chapter daily but if you can meditate upon a few verses every day, that is better than simply reading for one hour and then forgetting the topics until the next reading."

*Srila Prabhupada Letter to Paramananda.*

Everyone is welcome

Join Gita Jayanti celebrations at the temple; 2.00pm – 3.00pm Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December when we will recite important slokas from Bhagavad-gita.



On Mokshada Ekadasi & Gita Jayanthi

ISKCON Belfast presents

**Bhagavad Gita Recitation**

140 IMPORTANT SLOKAS FROM BHAGAVAD GITA

On Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December from 2 - 3 pm  
At Iskon Belfast, 2a Brooklands Grange, Dunmurry  
Belfast BT17 0SA

Register for this course on - <https://bit.ly/3NY2Nr6>

For any queries, WhatsApp or call - 07424483907



## Liquid Beauty and the Mighty Dollar

### An essay by Hg Aditya Varna devi dasi

*"Women are naturally beautiful. They are called the fair sex. This attractive feature of woman is advantage and disadvantage also." (Srila Prabhupada lecture, 1972)*

The Neues museum in Berlin is home to the bust of Egypt's ancient Queen, Nefertiti. Half a million people visit annually to view this icon of classical feminine beauty and study her mysterious allure. The fifteenth century painting; *The Birth of Venus* by Sandro Botticelli, depicting the Roman goddess of love standing on a sea shell with just her long hair covering her body, was painted in 1486 and given as a wedding present to a member of the Medici family, who ruled the city of Florence at the time. Today it hangs today in the Uffizi gallery in Florence and it attracts around four million visitors annually; The Louvre gallery in Paris is home to the grand dame herself, Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, where each year nine million visitors jostle for a position to catch a glimpse of her enigmatic beauty. These famous female faces are depicted in fashion, street art, books and films; female beauty is box office.

How the female form is depicted in art is a mirror of the culture and time in which it is created. In Christian Medieval European art, women were generally portrayed in a mood of pious devotion but this has changed; The present-day, hyper-sexualized society began to form around the beginning of the twentieth century and Pablo Picasso's famous painting *Les Femmes d'Alger*, portraying young women in a brothel, was an example of how art was involved in shaping a different type of society. When it was first presented in public, this painting shocked even his contemporaries in the art world. An art dealer selected this painting, which for largely ignored for many years after it was first presented and he created a movement around it called *The Modern Art Movement*, inviting other artists who rejected tradition, to also reject moral values in their work. Today it hangs in the *Museum of Modern Art* in New York City and according to E Michael Jones's *Degenerate Moderns*, it was voted the most popular painting of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

"Sex sells" is an advertising industry motto which was conceived by Edward Bernays, a nephew of Sigmund Freud. He was intrigued by Freud's view that people are generally a mass of passions and desires and when overwhelmed by them, they lose their rational mind. Capitalism cannot not survive if consumers are not being seduced and seduction techniques are becoming

more and more explicit, especially in relation to the pornographic industry which generates billions of dollars annually.

Srila Prabhupada comments on contemporary society: *The defect of the present civilization is just like that. This is a civilization of nescience or illusion and therefore civilization has been turned. This dangerous ignorance of humanity is a gross nescience and it has created a dangerous civilization. (Srila Prabhupada Lilamrita)*

The omnipresent images of underdressed women are used to sell all sorts of commodities, reinforcing in women's minds that they should present a particular body image. This can lead to various types of psychological problems. In Naomi Wolf's book, *The Beauty Myth*, she exposes the lie that the sexual liberation movement, promoted in the 1960's, offered freedom. She argues that it was actually a controlling device, used to enslave both men and women. Her basic premise is that, as women's social power and prominence in public has increased, they are expected to adhere to unrealistic social standards of physical beauty, as dictated by industries that do not have their best interest at heart.

Today's "Me, Myself, I" culture easily seduces narcissistic people into manipulating and charming members of the opposite sex and it is facilitated by social-media outlets. Young people are willing participants in this game of seduction, resulting in an increasingly dangerous social environment.



In *Bhagavad-gita* Krishna warns:

*tri-vidhaṁ narakasyedaṁ  
dvāraṁ nāśanam ātmanaḥ  
kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas  
tasmād etat trayaṁ tyajet*

**There are three gates leading to this hell – lust, anger and greed. Every sane man should give these up, for they lead to the degradation of the soul.**

Purport

The beginning of demoniac life is described herein. One tries to satisfy his lust, and when he cannot, anger and greed arise. A sane man who does not want to glide down to the species of demoniac life must try to give up these three enemies, which can kill the self to such an extent that there will be no possibility of liberation from this material entanglement. *Bhagavad-gita* 16.21

Ancient stories have lessons to teach us about the pitfalls of sexual attraction. There is a story about a powerful man who fell in love with a beautiful girl. She was a saintly person and she rejected his advances but since he persisted, she asked him to leave and return in seven days. For seven days she consumed strong doses of laxatives and purgatives and she stored the vomit and stool in clay pots. When the man returned, he did not recognize the girl; She had become emaciated and her physical beauty had disappeared. She showed him the contents of the pots and explained that what he had seen before was an illusion. He began to understand the temporary nature of mundane beauty. Thus, the story of liquid beauty was revealed.

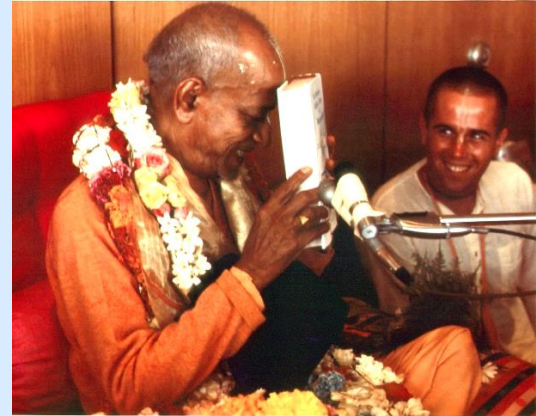
Lust's vicious flame can only be reduced when we surrender to the lotus feet of the Lord and His interior female energy, *Srimati Radharani*.

"The beauty of *Srimati Radharani* is described as follows: Her eyes defeat the attractive feature of the eyes of the Cakori bird. When one sees the face of *Radharani* he immediately hates the beauty of the moon. Her bodily complexion defeats the beauty of gold. Thus, let us all look upon the transcendental beauty of *Srimati Radharani*" (*Nectar of Devotion*).



"One who is attracted by the beauty of Radha and Krishna cannot be attracted by the false beauty of this material world." *Srimad Bhagavatam* 3.20.31

## Book Distribution



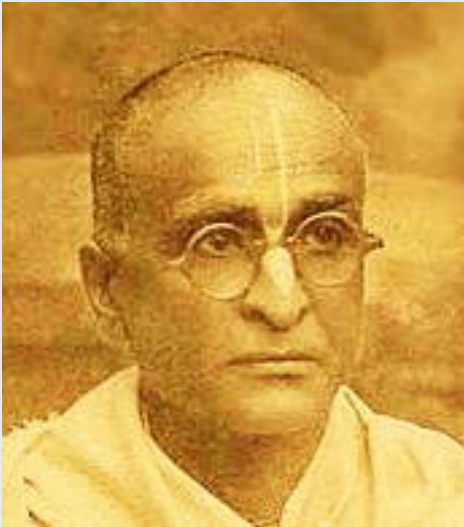
**In October 2022, 446 books were distributed in the temple, through street and door-to-door distribution and to charities.**

So go on with your organisation for distribution of my books through press and other modern media and Krishna will certainly be pleased upon you. we can use everything Television, radio, movies, or whatever there may be to tell about Krishna and outside of devotional service all these modern paraphernalia are just so much rubbish.



## On Chanting Hare Krishna

By Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and Srila Prabhupada



"By sincerely endeavouring to chant Harinama without offenses and remaining fixed in chanting constantly, one's offenses will fade and pure Harinama will arise on the tongue." *The Gaudiya, 1934, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura.*

"The Holy Name is by nature eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. By the Holy Name's mercy the living entities revive their spiritual consciousness. Sri Krishna, who is the reservoir of all transcendental pleasure, manifests in a heart filled with simplicity, before eyes that have been fully spiritualized, on a tongue inclined to His service and in an ear inclined to hear Kṛṣṇa-katha. The Holy Name manifests in those senses that are engaged only in pleasing His senses." *Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami, Amṛta Vani 108 Essential instructions.*



We do not ask anyone to first change his position and then come to us. Instead, we invite everyone to come with us and simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare, Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare because we know that if one simply chants and hears the topics of Kṛṣṇa, one's life will change; he will see a new light, and his life will be successful." *Srimad Bhagavatam 4.7.44*

"The most important aspect of our preaching is kirtana. Induce people to chant. That is the only thing. The goal is to make devotees and books – both are required. Distributing the books will make devotees." *Srila Prabhupada lecture, 1976.*

**12<sup>th</sup> December marks the disappearance day of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura (1874-1937).**



At 5.30am on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1937, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura's servant heard him say "O Krishna, Krishna" and he immediately left this world. That day, the entire state of Bengal observed a day of mourning in honour of this great saint.

A short time earlier Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura had given some instructions to his disciples:

**"As I have always said, dedicate your lives to serving Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's movement. A glorious time is coming. Very soon the whole world will become inundated with Krishna-prema. Therefore, take advantage of this opportunity and become involved in that glorious mission. Please continue to spread Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mercy collectively, with a spirit of selfless dedication."**



**Ongoing Sunday programmes**  
**“Benefits of studying *Bhagavad-gita*”**  
**and our Sunday school**  
**“Caitanya’s Children”**

**See the posters below for details.**

These programmes take place on Sunday afternoons, giving adults and children an opportunity to learn about and participate in Krishna conscious philosophy and activities.



**ISKCON Belfast Presents**  
 Dealing with stress, fear and anxiety through the wisdom of the Bhagavad-gita

**Benefits of studying Bhagavad-gita (Gita-Mahatmyam)**

**Overview of 18 Chapters in 18 Sessions**

**Level 1: 18th September - 6th November**  
**Level 2: 13th November Onwards**

All classes will be @2pm every Sunday, followed by Maha-arati and prasadam.

For any queries, WhatsApp or call - **07424483907**

ISKCON Belfast, Founder Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupad, 2A, Brooklands Grange, Dunmurry, Belfast - BT17 0SA

Register for this course on - <https://bit.ly/3C8ml8b>

For more details please join our ISKCON Belfast temple whatsapp group using the link <https://iskconbelfast.co.uk/contact/>



**ISKCON Belfast Presents**  
**CHAITANYA'S CHILDREN SUNDAY SCHOOL**

For ages 7-11  
 Duration - September to May

**EVERY SUNDAY FROM 1.30 PM TO 3:00 PM FOLLOWED BY ARATI AND PRASADAM.**

All activities aim to incorporate the spiritual and moral values of Vedic culture in the minds of young kids.

**ACTIVITIES:** SLOKAS, SONGS, STORIES, ARTS & CRAFTS, GAMES, COOKERY

**THE COURSE ENDS WITH AN ANNUAL KIDS' FESTIVAL.**

**To Register**  
 Call **07780396463** or Whatsapp **+918870307578**

**All for just £25.00. This will be refunded to everyone who has attended at least 80% of the classes**

ISKCON Belfast, Founder Acharya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupad, 2A, Brooklands Grange, Dunmurry, Belfast - BT17 0SA

**Temple bhoga donations**

We would like to thank everyone for their generous donations.

The following bhoga items are appreciated and will be used for Sunday prasadam feasts:

**Basmati rice**

**Ghee**

**Sunflower oil**

**Mung dal**

**Chapati flour**

**Chickpea flour**

“One who offers the Deity gifts of land, markets, cities and villages so that the regular daily worship and special festivals of the Deity may go on continually, will achieve opulence equal to My own.” *Srimad Bhagavatam* 11.27.51

That is the nature of spiritual life – We look after the Deities and the Krishna looks after us.

**Chant**



**And make your life sublime**

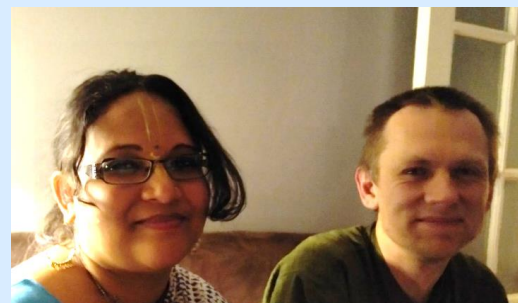




## Damodara-arati house programmes in Oct/Nov



Dhruva offers a ghee lamp to Lord Damodara



Kirtaneers, Anusha and Alex.



Left: Bhakta Tanoj.  
Below: Kishori devi dasi, Vijayalaksmi and Rani Rukmini devi dasi.



Left and above: Susakha dasa and Kishori devi dasi hosted Damodara Puja on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> November.







Fruits and sweets were offered to Lord Damodara



Munish and Rina hosted Damodara Puja in their home on 22 October

## Temple updates

Website & Facebook



Website



Facebook page



## How can you help?

To help with temple maintenance and important preaching programmes, please consider setting up a monthly standing order:

**Ulster Bank  
ISKCON Belfast  
Account No: 40933052  
Sort Code: 98-05-90**

or

**Paypal:** (ctrl & click on the link below)

**Donate**



Join us every Sunday @2.00pm for class, arati and vegetarian feast

**Temple mobile:** 07424483907

**Landline:** 02890620530

**Email:** [info@iskconbelfast.co.uk](mailto:info@iskconbelfast.co.uk)

**Address:** 2A Brooklands Grange,  
Dunmurry, BT17 0SA.

**Website** <https://iskconbelfast.co.uk>



## Interfaith Week at Forge Integrated Primary School

On 15<sup>th</sup> November, as part of Schools Interfaith Week, devotees were invited to visit Forge Integrated primary school. Primary Five children enjoyed hearing stories about Krishna's childhood adventures and about Srila Prabhupada's transcendental journey to New York in 1965.



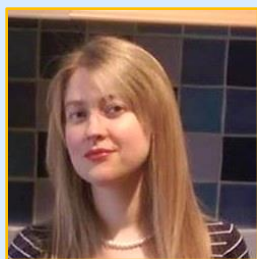
Teachers and pupils were happy to join in chanting Hare Krishna from their mantra cards.

Left: Teachers, Grainne and Anne, who took copies of Bhagavad-gita, Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers and the Higher Taste for the school library and student teacher, Mark.

Right: Classroom assistant, Ruth, was eager to learn about Krishna consciousness and she took some flyers home to her family.



Forge is one of seventy schools in Northern Ireland where integrated education is offered. These schools educate children from all religious and non-religious backgrounds. Visitors from various faiths are regularly invited to speak and Forge have a new Religion department where religious classes are available to those who want them.



## December recipe

### Christmas pudding

by Deva



To make this you will need a ceramic or plastic pudding basin.

This pudding needs to be steamed for six hours so it's something you can do when you're at home for the day. It can be steamed for two hours in a pressure cooker. Serves 4-6.

#### Ingredients

85g plain flour  
85g soft brown sugar  
85g vegetable suet  
85g grated apple  
1 small carrot, grated  
Half a lemon, zest and juice  
Half an orange, zest and juice  
455g mixed dried fruit  
45g breadcrumbs  
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg  
3/4 teaspoon mixed spice  
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 tablespoon golden syrup  
6 -7 tablespoons milk or plant-based milk  
You will also need baking paper and some string or wool.

#### Method

1. Add the flour, sugar, suet, spices, breadcrumbs and dried fruit to a large mixing bowl.
2. Zest, then juice both the lemon and orange into the mixture. Peel and grate the carrot and the apple, adding to the rest of the ingredients, followed by the milk and golden syrup. Mix thoroughly and scrape into a greased pudding bowl.

the ingredients, followed by the milk and golden syrup. Mix thoroughly and scrape into a greased pudding bowl.



3. If you are using a ceramic pudding bowl, rather than a lidded plastic one, cut out two 12 inch squares of baking paper. Put one on top of the other and fold a pleat in the middle



4. Put the baking paper over the top of the bowl - it's easiest if you get someone to hold it in place while you tie a piece of wool around the bowl, roughly where the Equator would be on the bowl.

5. Steam the pudding using a stacking set of steamer saucepans or in a large pot. If using a large pot, make sure the water isn't so high that it seeps into the pudding - it seems safest to very carefully add some boiling water once the pudding bowl is in place. Keep an eye on it to make sure the water doesn't all boil away.

6. Allow to cool before turning over the basin to remove the pudding. You can re-heat it in the microwave for 5 minutes. Serve with ice cream, cream or custard.