

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

A HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

San Francisco, California: June 17, 2007



Srila Narayana Maharaja arrived in San Francisco on June 11th. He is staying at the Marriott Residence Inn, which is about a forty-five minute drive from the place of his Bhakti-yoga Festival at the Asian Cultural Center.

Every morning, Srila Maharaja goes for a walk from 5:30 to 6:30 am. When he returns, he sits down for about 15 minutes for a short darsana with the devotees before taking breakfast. On June 17th, Fathers' Day, when he returned from his walk, about 15 of his lady disciples were waiting for him with flowers and gifts in honor of the special holiday.



On the phone with his spiritual daughter Bimala dasi from Houston, who called to wish him a happy Fathers's Day.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Is today Father's Day for females only, or also for males?

[Devotees:] For males also.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja :] Then why are the males not giving me any gifts?
I have more affection for my daughters. None of the men told me it was Father's Day.

[Sripad Damodara Maharaja:] Srila Gurudeva, you said on the morning walk that even though the father has so much affection for his son, he may not show it directly. He may not take the son on his lap. We know you love your sons best; therefore you are not showing it.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] I have more affection for my daughters.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja and all his spiritual sons and daughters laughing in the midst of this loving familial exchange.]

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] My blessings to all of you today is that pure bhakti will come in your heart. The greed to serve, raganuga-bhakti, will come. You should attain your highest goal. What is your highest goal?

[Caru-candrika dasi:] Manjari-bhava.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Radha-dasyam. In the West, after the sons' marriage, the fathers and sons separate from each other. The sons do no service at all for their fathers. In India, however, even when their mothers and fathers are very old, the children serve. Nowadays, a 'wind' has come from the Western countries to India, and old persons are suffering. They are not allowed to live with their families. Still in villages, though, they are taken care of by their children. I want you all to follow varna-asrama-dharma. This is an example of varna-asrama-dharma.

[Gokula dasa:] If we are in family life, we should take care of our mother and father?
*[See endnote]

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Yes, and have good relations with your brothers. Lord Rama wanted to give His kingdom to Bharata and Bharata wanted to give the kingdom to Rama. They were quarreling about this point. Nowadays, it is the opposite; we quarrel for our own ownership. We should be like Rama and Bharata.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has told us to be like trees. A tree gives its leaves, fruits, branches, flowers, juice, fruits, shade, and wood to others. We should try to not live for ourselves, but for others. Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja left everything in his old age and traveled the entire world to benefit others. I also only travel to help and bring the highest benefit to all, and to follow our guru-parampara.

[Mahaprabhu dasa from Australia tells Srila Gurudeva that his 13 year-old daughter, Tulasi dasi was there to see him]

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] She came to hear hari-katha?

[Mahaprabhu dasa:] Yes. She took initiation from you a few years ago, and now wants second initiation from you.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja (to Tulasi dasi):] How many rounds do you chant?

[Tulsi dasi:] I am building up.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] How many rounds are you chanting?

[Tulsi dasi:] Two rounds.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Very good. But no diksa now.

When you will realize the glories of the holy name – that the holy name can save you from the pain of endless birth and death, then you will chant more. Money and worldly things cannot make you happy. These holy names will give you Krsna-prema. You will be able to serve Radha and Krsna forever. When you will realize this, then you will chant more. When I come to Australia, you can receive the diksa-mantras.



Hearing a Father's Day letter.

[*Endnote – Srila Maharaja's words inspired further questions two hours later:

[Question:] In this morning's darsana you said we should follow varna-asrama-dharma. You said we should serve our mother and father and brothers.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Not only on Father's Day, but every day.

[Question:] What if we have a material mother, father, and brother?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Those who are grhastha (householders) should do so, and those who are renounced, who have given up the world, should serve their holy master.

[Question:] A householder should serve even their material mother and father?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Yes, they should serve their mother, father and brothers – whether or not their parents are devotees or non-devotees. Otherwise they will have to go to hell. Everyone who is not a pure devotee has debts to others in this world. When my father used to come to Mathura, I would take his foot-dust on my head.

[Sripad Madhava Maharaja:] His father was a devotee.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Even though I am a sannyasi and he was a grhastha, I did so. He was my first guru. He taught me Mahabharata, Ramayana and other scriptures.]

[They serve their parents to inspire them to become devotees. The parents receive good impressions by remembering how their devotee children always gave respect to them, and brought them prasadam and the good news about what is best for their eternal welfare. –ed.]

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