

# Puri Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, Jagannathdev, & His Dham

A SPECIAL DISCOURSE GIVEN BY

HIS DIVINE GRACE SRILA BHAKTI SUNDAR GOVINDA DEV-GOSWAMI MAHARAJ

FOR THIS SRI JAGANNATHDEV'S RATHAYATRA EDITION OF **Sri Gaudiya Darshan**

**Question:** During the later pastimes of Srila Guru Maharaj we heard that he wanted to spend his last days in Jagannath Puri. Is this correct?

**Srila Govinda Maharaj:** Yes, but mentally. In earlier years sometimes Srila Guru Maharaj went to Puri for observing 'Urjja-vrata' during Karttik month. He used to stay in the place that is now the 'Aravinda Ashram.'

Actually, in Mahaprabhu's *lila*, Puri is similar to Kuruksetra in Krsna's *lila*. The mood of union in separation and intense service-need is at its greatest there. Mahaprabhu expressed:

*priyah so 'yam kṛṣṇah  
sahacari kurukṣetra-militas  
tathāham sã rãdhã tad idam  
ubhayoḥ saṅgama-sukham  
tathãpy antaḥ-khelan-madhura-  
murali-pañcama-juṣe  
mano me kãlindī-pulina-  
vipinãya sprhayati*

(C.c. Madhya 1.76)

This is a verse spoken by Srimati Radharani to Srimati Lalita Devi, and Srila Rupa Goswami expressed it in this way: "Krsna who lived earlier in Vrindavan Dham, that Krsna is now here before me and I am already in union with Him. I am thinking that this Krsna and I, we are the same persons as were living in Vrindavan, and that Krsna has mercifully given us His union here. This is sufficient for anyone, but it is not pleasing my heart so nicely because my heart is hankering to be in Vrindavan with this Krsna. Here also we are playing with Krsna and dancing with Him. All our activities are going

nicely with Him, but still I am not happy with that. My heart always wants the association of Krsna on the banks of the Yamuna where there are many varieties of *kunjās*<sup>1</sup> and He plays His flute.

"Here Krsna is not playing a flute, but in Vrindavan He plays His flute and calls everyone through that sound, and there He plays with us like our boyfriend. We want to meet with Krsna on those banks of the Yamuna, and that will give me full satisfaction, whereas this meeting in Kuruksetra is giving me neither full satisfaction nor peace within my heart." This is the meaning of the Kuruksetra-*lila* with the *Vraja-vasis*<sup>2</sup>. Here we find the most extreme mood of separation.

On a plate there may be your favourite foodstuffs, but if you cannot take that food then what will be your feeling? Similarly if Krsna is in front of you but you cannot play as you like with Him, the mood of separation is very strong.

## Mahaprabhu's Separation

In Puri, Mahaprabhu went every day to see Lord Jagannath living in the Temple, and He saw Jagannathdev to be Krsna, but still He was not satisfied with that. He needed to meet Krsna with the Yamuna, flute, etc. Such feelings of separation came to Mahaprabhu and he suffered from that so much. It is that mood of separation that Srila Bhakti-

vinod Thakur worshipped. He did not worship union, but he worshipped the mood of separation of Mahaprabhu. Such mood of separation happened in Kuruksetra, therefore he wrote that in Vrindavan live bogus persons whereas the real devotees of Krsna live in Kuruksetra.

## Kuruksetra Ashram

Srila Prabhupad Saraswati Thakur sent Srila Guru Maharaj to Kuruksetra to make a Centre. As Math Commander he lead a small group of devotees and he succeeded in making an Ashram there. I have seen that place.

**Question:** Is it also the case that when the devotees saw Mahaprabhu in Puri they had the feeling, "This is Mahaprabhu, but we want Him as Nimai in Nabadwip"?

**Srila Govinda Maharaj:** Yes. Such feeling is shown in the *sloka* by Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur:

*ãmi cãi gaurachandra laite mãyãpure*

Here Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur expresses the great mood of separation he felt to see the *sannyas-vesa*<sup>†</sup> of Mahaprabhu in Gambhira. "I like to see Sri Chaitanyadev, but I particularly want to worship, remember, see and serve Gaurachandra, Visvambhar Pandit. It is my desire to see the *Mayapur-lila* of young Sri Gaurasundar. As Nimai Pandit He had beautiful hair, He decorated Himself with fine clothing, and He engaged in pastimes like a young

<sup>1</sup>*kunjās*: groves

<sup>2</sup>*Vraja-vasis*: residents of Vrindavan

<sup>†</sup>*sannyas-vesa*: *sannyas* clothing



## Finding a place

In Puri the devotees tried for a long time to buy a piece of land but they were repeatedly unsuccessful. Then I promised to Srila Guru Maharaj, "I will take charge of purchasing the land. I will go there and within two months we must certainly get something."

I wanted to follow the example of Srila Rupa Goswami, Srila Sanatan Goswami, Srila Haridas Thakur, etc., which was not to disturb the strict regulations of Jagannathdev's 'pandas'.<sup>†</sup> I therefore looked in the area frequented by the Western travellers and which is a little distance from the Temple. I also wanted to avoid staying near other Missions of the Gaudiya Maths so as to avoid any danger of *aparadha*.

## Jagannath's wish

I tried so hard, but each piece of land that seemed suitable was eventually found to be under litigation or otherwise unavailable. Six weeks passed in this search, to no avail. Finally I prayed to Lord Jagannath, "Wherever you will give some land, I will make a Temple there." Within three days news reached me through Sripad Damodar Maharaj that a man wanted to sell some land in the area of Gaur Batsahi. I met the proprietor and within five minutes the sale was settled, and within just fifteen days it was registered.

## Our own Puri Centre

Our prayer to Lord Jagannath, Lord Baladeva and Lady Subhadra should be: "Kindly grant us some opportunity to render service at Jagannath Puri." Srila Guru Maharaj gave a clue to *bhajan* life under Pandit Gadadhar. Our Math is near his Temple, the Temple of Tota-Gopinath. Going from our Temple towards Tota-Gopinath Temple, on the right side is Sri Purusottama Math, the Temple established by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupad.



Puri Sri Chaitanya Sarawat Math

We purchased the land for our temple in 1984 and the Deities were installed in 1990. Service goes on at our Math in Puri daily.

Sripad Purnananda Prabhu is overseeing the management at our Puri Math. Sripad B.S. Niskincan Maharaj heads the service to the Deities and the Math; Sripad B.S. Visnu Maharaj engages in preaching, and Sripad Venu Vilas Adhikari Prabhu looks after our 'Sevak Bhavan,' our devotees' guest-house. Sevak Bhavan is now well-known in Puri, and all the town's rickshaw drivers know its location.

**Question:** How did the Deities come to our Ashram in Puri?

**Srila Govinda Maharaj:** Inspiration came from Srila Guru Maharaj that there may be no—or at least very few—*Sri Vighras*<sup>†</sup> of Nityananda Prabhu in Puri Dham. At that time several Deities of Mahaprabhu were there but not of Nityananda Prabhu.

In Nabadwip we were already keeping two Deities: Sri Nitai and Sri

Chaitanyadev. It was at first the desire of Srila Guru Maharaj that these Deities of Nityananda Prabhu and Mahaprabhu would play in Govinda Kunda opposite the Temple here in Nabadwip, and still it is in my mind to try to manifest such a project here. I would like to do it this year itself, and I have asked one good carpenter devotee to come. He can do so much *seva* in the Centenary Hall and especially he can make a nice *singhasan*<sup>†</sup> and a boat for Sri Sri Nitai-Gauranga's pastimes in Govinda Kund. It has been my hidden desire to do this, and I have already purchased some teak wood especially for this project.

When I asked Srila Guru Maharaj if I could take these Sri Sri Nitai-Gaura Deities from here to Puri, he agreed, and said that if I wish, I may take them.

So, by the grace and will of Srila Guru Maharaj when our Puri Math manifested, Mahaprabhu accepted the name of Chaitanya and went with Nitai to Puri for Their pastimes. Srila Guru Maharaj honoured these Deities and he touched the feet of Them both. They are very exalted and very heavy.

## Nitai-Chaitanyadev's arati kirttan

Previously there was no *kirttan* written for the particular *arati* of Sri Sri Nitai-Chaitanya. Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur had previously composed the *Panca-tattva Arati* (*kiba jaya jaya gauracander arotika sobha...*) and he composed *Yugala-arati* (*jaya jaya radhakrsna-yugala-milan...*) for the worship of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, but no *kirttan* had been composed for Mahaprabhu and Radha-Krsna on one altar. Therefore, Srila Guru Maharaj composed Sri *Saraswat-arati* specifically for the worship of our Nabadwip Math Deities, Sri Sri Guru-Gauranga-Gandharva-Govindasundarjiu. It was following their example and by Srila Guru Maharaj's inspiration that I composed *Nitai-Chaitanyadev Arati* for our Deities in Puri.

<sup>†</sup>*pandas*: servitor worshippers

<sup>†</sup>*Sri Vighraha*: Deity

<sup>†</sup>*singhasan*: ornate throne

## The location

The area of our Temple is called 'Gaur Batsahi' which means the way and area of Mahaprabhu. It is the place where Mahaprabhu would regularly pass through, most probably after visiting the Jagannath Temple, going to see Srila Haridas Thakur, or going to bathe in the sea. The area is near the lotus feet of Chatak Parvat, the Govardhan Hill of Purusottama Dham.

**Question:** You mentioned that our Puri Math is near to Sri Gadadhar Pandit's Ashram. In what way can devotees derive benefit from this proximity?

**Srila Govinda Maharaj:** You can gain benefit from everywhere. It exists within one's mood of devotion; benefit's nature is like that. But there is some particular opportunity that when seeing Sri Gadadhar Pandit's Ashram you can remember the pastimes of Mahaprabhu.

Gadadhar Pandit lived a little distance from Mahaprabhu's Ashram. Mahaprabhu lived about one kilometre away at Kasi Misra Bhavan, now known as 'Gambhira.' When Mahaprabhu would go to bathe and meet with Srila Haridas Thakur he would sometimes come via the road past Sri Gadadhar Pandit's Ashram and He would meet with him.

Also Sri Gadadhar Pandit sometimes invited Mahaprabhu to take *Prasadam* there. Every day Sri Gadadhar Pandit would offer *bhoga* to the Deities in his Ashram and sometimes he would offer that to Mahaprabhu who would immediately come and accept it. Sri Gadadhar Pandit did not buy anything, but would somehow collect all ingredients. Mahaprabhu especially liked a particular spinach preparation that Sri Gadadhar Pandit made.

## Extreme separation

In His later pastimes, almost every day Mahaprabhu would go to the ocean and meet with Sri Gadadhar Pandit, and Sri Gadadhar Pandit would sometimes go to Gambhira and read the *Srimad-*

## Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Chaitanya-Ārati

Composed by

Śrīla Bhati Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj  
for the worship of Śrī Śrī Nitāi-Chaitanyadev, the Deities in  
our Jagannath Puri Temple

**jaya guru mahārāja karuṇāsāgara  
śrī bhakti rakṣaka deva-goswāmī śrīdhara**

**prakāśile nilācale bhuvanamaṅgala  
nitāi-caitanya-deva-sevā samujjala**

**gorāpreme mātoyārā nityānandarūpa  
rasarāja mahābhāva caitanya-svarūpa**

**kasita-kāñcana jini śrī-aṅga lābani  
dūhūgale vanamālā bhāvera dolanī**

**murachita kotikāma rūparāsaraṅge  
madhūra nartana-bhāva varābhaya bhaṅge**

**koti-candra-bhānuśobhā ratna-simhāsane  
prema netre dekhe mahābhāgyavāna jane**

**mṛdaṅga mandirā bāje suśaṅkha-dhvānita  
śruti-moli-ratnamālā-dīpa-nirājita**

**bhuvanamohan dūhū rūpera ārati  
gupta-vrindāraṇyavāsī dekhe niravadhi**

**śrī svarūpa rāmānanda rūpa-sanātana  
raghunātha haridāsa gadādhara dhana**

**sārvvabhauma gopinātha jīvānugajana  
dekkena āratīsobha durllabha-darśana**

**nadiyā prakāśe nityānanda-gauranidhi  
patita-pāvana-kṣetre milāila vidhi**

**avicintya nityānanda-caitanya-prakāśa  
śrī guru-prasāde dekhe e adhama dāsa**

**(śrī guru-prasāde dekhe śrī govinda dāsa)**

*Bhagavatam* to Mahaprabhu. For the last twelve years Mahaprabhu lived in Puri in an extreme mood of separation in Gambhira. When Mahaprabhu was so intoxicated with *Krsna-prema* in Gambhira, and constantly in the mood of separation from Krsna and crying, crying, crying; at that time Gadadhar Pandit would go there and give nourishment through his reading of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

Mahaprabhu considered every letter of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* to be a manifestation of Krsna, and when He heard it from Gadadhar Pandit's lotus mouth He felt so much peace and felt Himself to be fully nourished. Sri Gadadhar Pandit served Mahaprabhu in this way.

## Pranam composition

Srila Guru Maharaj composed the *pranam mantram* to Sri Gadadhar Pandit, *nilāmbhoditaṭe sadā...*<sup>†</sup>

"If a friend feels so much separation from his girlfriend or boyfriend, he or she cannot understand what to do and may even act like a madman. At that time a friend may try to make him peaceful by giving a little wine or something similar. The ecstatic recitations of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* by Sri Gadadhar Pandit are likened to this nourishment which he gave to Sriman Mahaprabhu in His extreme mood of separation from Sri Krsna. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is the non-different form of Krsna Himself, and it is ecstasy in the form of sound vibration. Sriman Mahaprabhu would sit opposite Gadadhar Pandit and He

would receive nourishment from Sri Gadadhar Pandit's reading of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

"Sri Gadadhar Pandit himself became intoxicated to chant the *slokas* from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and he would cry. With those tears he worshipped his dearest friend, Sriman Mahaprabhu. Such is the mood of Gadadhar Pandit, and that Sri Gadadhar Pandit Goswami is the only shelter of my life."

Mahaprabhu took the whole *bhav* and *kanthi* of Srimati Radharani; that is, all the mood and colour of Srimati Radharani was taken by Mahaprabhu because He wanted to taste Her ecstasy. Sri Gadadhar Pandit is Radharani minus the mood of Herself, that having been taken by Mahaprabhu. Sri Gadadhar Pandit is the incarnation of Srimati Radharani, but he is subdued. However, this is of another plane, and it is all full.

## The vow of Sri Gadadhar Pandit

A short while after Mahaprabhu took *sannyas* it was decided by the devotees in Shantipur and agreed by Sachi Mata, that Mahaprabhu would stay in Jagannath Puri. Then Sri Gadadhar Pandit decided, "I shall go there and stay." Sri Gadadhar Pandit took *ksetra-sannyas*, which means that he promised to accept to stay in one place. That place was his Ashram, the Temple of Tota Gopinath.

The Orissan poet Govinda Das Kavi was in Puri at the time of Mahaprabhu's leaving His manifest pastimes, and he

wrote that Mahaprabhu left by entering within the Tota-Gopinath Deity. Srila Prabhupad Saraswati Thakur did not accept all his writings, but he did accept this idea of Sriman Mahaprabhu's disappearance.

Sri Tota Gopinath is also famous for His pastime that one night He sat down so that Sri Gadadhar Pandit in his old age could still reach up to garland Him. He remains seated to this day.

## Guidance for going

**Question:** What guidance would you like to give for the devotees going to the Jagannath Rathayatra Festival this year?

**Srila Govinda Maharaj:** The first thing is not to break any rules and regulations of the Jagannath Temple. They will humbly try to see the places of the pastimes of Mahaprabhu and His associates such as Srila Haridas Thakur, Sri Ramananda Ray, Sri Svarupa Damodar, Sri Raghunath Das Goswami, Sri Sarvabhauma Battacharya, Sri Gadadhar Pandit, Sri Jagadananda Prabhu, Sri Paramananda Puri Goswami, Maharaj Prataparudra's house, Gundica, Sikhi Mahiti's house, and many others. They will see these places and try to feel in their heart the mood of union in separation shown by Sriman Mahaprabhu, and they will offer prayers to the associates of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. If they cannot go inside any of the places then they can see these places from outside.

## Seeing the Dham

**Question:** We have heard it is recommended that a visitor to Vrindavan should stay just three nights so as to minimize his chances of committing offences. Does this recommendation apply to Sri Puri Dham also?

**Srila Govinda Maharaj:** In fact this is not actually so. If the devotees will go to Vrindavan and follow the mood of Srila Rupa Goswami, Srila Sanatan Goswami and Srila Raghunath das Goswami they can stay in Vrindavan,

### †Śrīla Gadādhara-praṇāṭi

nilāmbhoditaṭe sadā svavirahākṣepānvitam bāndhavam  
śrīmad-bhāgavati-kathā madirayā sañjīvayan bhāti yaḥ  
śrīmad-bhāgavatam sadā svanayanāsrūpāyanaiḥ pūjayan  
goswāmipravaro gadādhara vibhurbhūyāt madekāgatiḥ

—Śrīla B.R. Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī

but they should not go there for business or for the Loi Bazaar shops.

The Dham is *chinmoy bhumi*—it is made of transcendental substance. Srila Guru Maharaj was questioned many times by the Western devotees as to how one should see Nabadwip Dham, and he clearly explained that it is *chinmoy bhumi*. So we should see the *Dham* in this way, and not with any mundane view.

The matter is that when we shall go to the *Dham* we shall try to live and feel where we are going: the feeling should come that it is the transcendental *Dham*, and Mahaprabhu's pastimes with his devotees are always going on.

## Sir, I am here

My own mood is that I do not go every day to the Temple of Lord Jagannath, but I go before Jagannath in His Temple and I say to Him in this way: "My *dandavat pranams* to Your lotus feet. I am present, Sir. I am here."

I cannot see Jagannath because I cannot see Him through my mind and vision, therefore I am not trying to approach Him in that way. Instead I am presenting myself in front of Jagannath with the mood and prayer, "I am here at Your lotus feet. Please see me."

"Please see me," means: "My good and my bad—everything is in front of You. You please make me as You like to see me." That is the mood. Then I do *parikrama* and then return to our Ashram by the ocean to stay under the lotus feet of Sri Sri Nitai-Chaitanyadev.

It is my advice to everyone not to behave like a businessman with Sri Jagannathdev. Not to approach Him in the way of, "I am paying my *dandavats*. Give me this, give me that. Make my son good, my wife good..." No. We shall pray like Prahlad Maharaj:

*yadi dāsyasi me kāmān  
varāms tvam varadarśabha  
kāmānām hṛdyasamroham  
bhavatas tu vṛṇe varam  
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.10.7)*

"If You want to give something to



**Jagannathdev, the Lord of Puri Dham**

me, and You are eager to give, then please give me this: that I shall not be again within the illusion of desiring anything. Please don't permit me to ask You for anything again. Please demolish that type of desire from my heart." This should be our prayer and this is *ananya-bhakti*<sup>†</sup> in *santa-rasa*.

When devotees will go to see Lord Jagannath during the time of Rathayatra they will see His Deity, no doubt, and they will pray: "Jagannathdev, if You want to give anything, please give devotion." We will make this our desire, and not anything of mundane form.

<sup>†</sup>*ananya-bhakti*: exclusive devotion

In the mundane plane, whatever bad or good will come to us will come according to our *karmma*. We will not involve our Master and Lord with that.

## Future plans

**Question:** Are there any future plans for our Ashram and guesthouse in Puri?

**Srila Govinda Maharaj:** We are always making some plans for the future *seva* to Sri Guru-Vaisnava. In Puri the construction of a further storey has already been sanctioned for our Sevak Bhavan devotee guesthouse.

**Question:** Upstairs in the devotees' quarters adjoining our Temple is a large new room for Your Divine Grace and you occupied it for some time. However last time you were in Puri you returned to your previous quarters downstairs in Sevak Bhavan. Why was that?

**Srila Govinda Maharaj:** Downstairs in Sevak Bhavan I feel much peace of mind, I am readily accessible to all, I can see all the comings and goings of the people and there is a nice garden outside, but upstairs in the Temple accommodation I cannot see who is coming and going, and I cannot meet with the devotees so readily.

If we invite anyone, they may feel a little trouble to climb the stairs. Also if I stay in Sevak Bhavan it is helpful to make the devotees there conscious of their conduct in the *Dham*. There is also plenty of space for devotees and guests to sit and meet with me. For these reasons I moved back to Sevak Bhavan, so that I can serve my Srila Guru Maharaj in a better way. •❧•

## Srila Govinda Maharaj's lotus guidance

*"If we want to serve Srila Guru Maharaj exclusively and not see anything else, then we will be relieved of all troubles. But we must try to serve Guru very attentively, only then will we get that chance, otherwise we will be cheated."*