



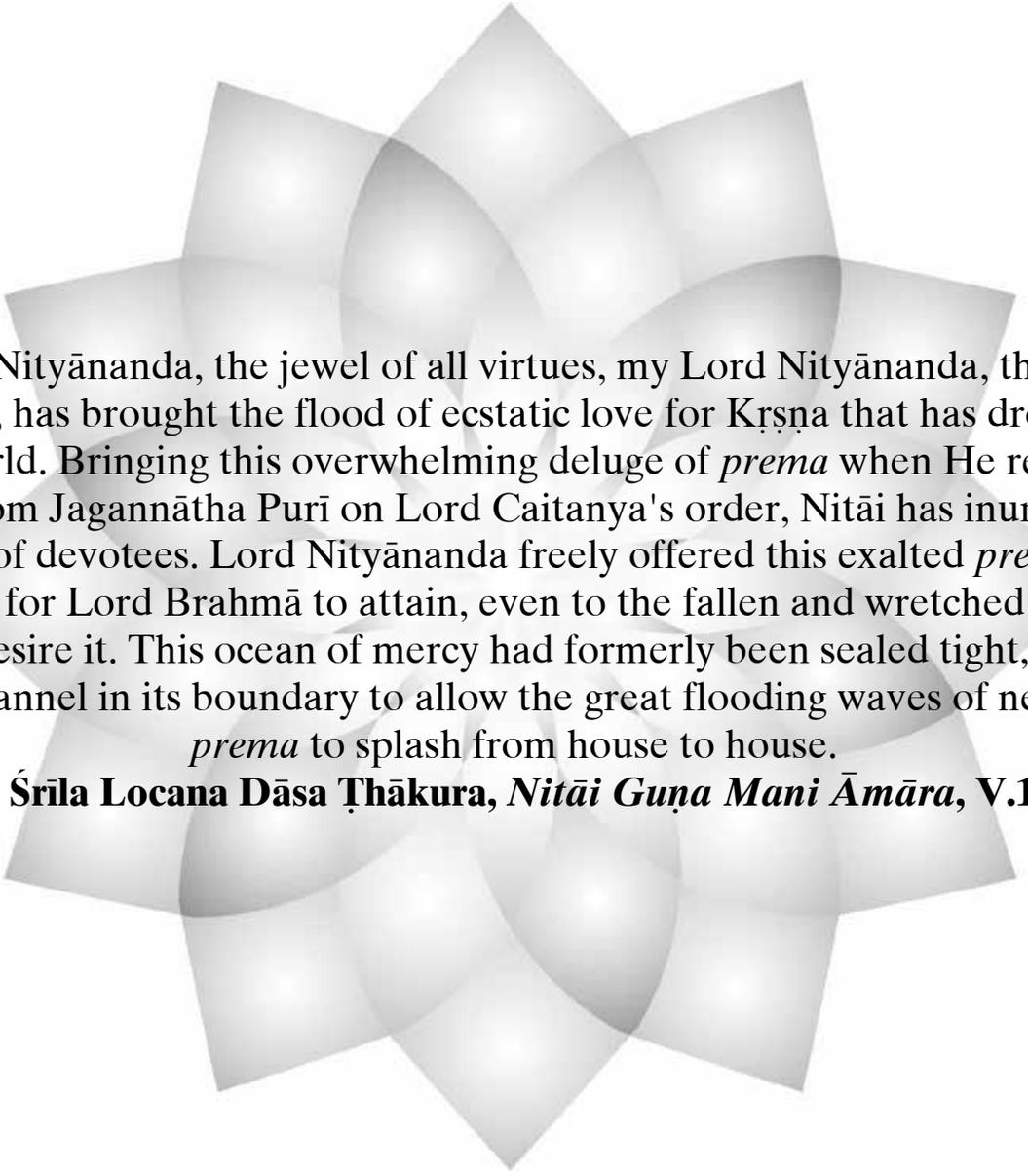
# *Prema Saṅkīrtana*

— It's a Gift of Eternal Love! —

So why not spend some time with the personification of  
*prema saṅkīrtana*?

— Śrī Nityānanda Rāma —

— Presented by Śrīmatī Dāsī and team  
ISKCON, Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma

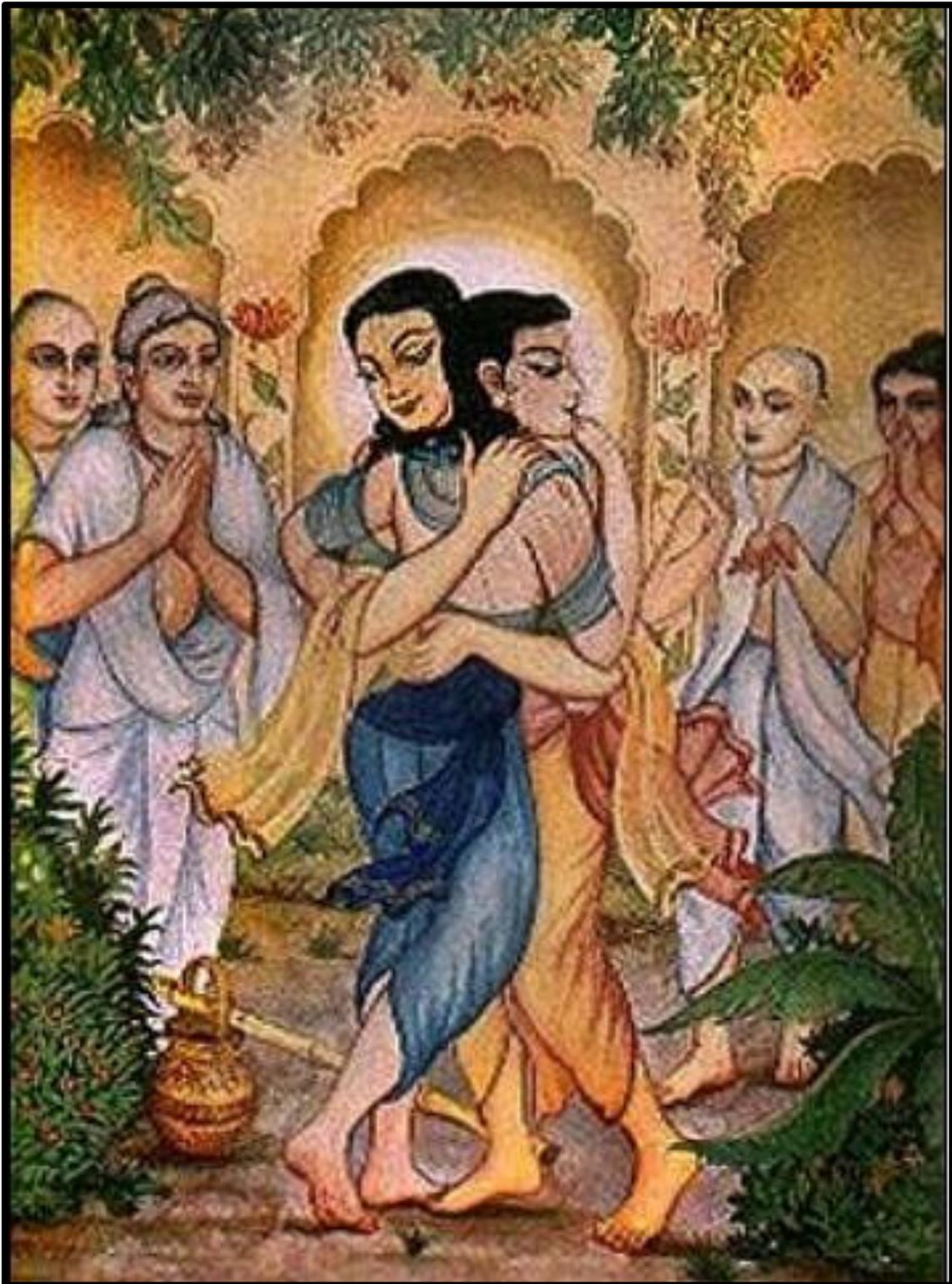


My Lord Nityānanda, the jewel of all virtues, my Lord Nityānanda, the jewel of all virtues, has brought the flood of ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa that has drowned the entire world. Bringing this overwhelming deluge of *prema* when He returned to Bengal from Jagannātha Purī on Lord Caitanya's order, Nitāi has inundated the assembly of devotees. Lord Nityānanda freely offered this exalted *prema*, which is difficult for Lord Brahmā to attain, even to the fallen and wretched souls who did not desire it. This ocean of mercy had formerly been sealed tight, but Nitāi cut a channel in its boundary to allow the great flooding waves of nectarean *prema* to splash from house to house.

— Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, *Nitāi Guṇa Mani Āmāra*, V.1-4

# An Intense Bond of Love

When Nityānanda and Gauracandra first met in Māyāpura, Their hearts were overwhelmed with inexplicable joy. They recognized each other, glorified each other and then simply gazed upon each other with deep love. The intense happiness They felt within Their hearts soon overflowed and streamed from Their eyes as a river of tears. Their hearts began to sing and dance in ecstasy and Their bodies soon followed — an ecstatic *prema-kīrtana* began ....



*Caitanya and Nitāi are bound by eternal love. They meditated on each other as They danced together. One of Them roared loudly, and the other one cried out. One of Them fell unconscious, while the other one wept. I am unable to describe the two Lords' transformations of love such as shivering, perspiring, hairs standing on end, crying, and falling unconscious in ecstasy. As They danced in Their own ecstasy, They sometimes embraced each other and cried.*

*They both tried to catch each other's feet, but They both cleverly avoided being caught. They both rolled on the ground in ecstasy and forgot Themselves while absorbed in Their own pastimes. They lost all external consciousness, and Their clothes scattered. Although the Vaiṣṇavas tried to pacify Them, they were unable. Who can hold They who support the three worlds? The two Lords became more and more intoxicated by the happiness of kīrtana.*

*Śrī Gaurasundara called out, "Chant! Chant!" and His entire body became soaked with tears of ecstasy. Having obtained the fulfillment of His long-cherished desire for the association of Nityānanda, the Lord completely forgot Himself and floated in an ocean of bliss.*

— CB, Madhya 5.24-33

## Love's Demand

Nitāi and Gauracandra were almost inseparable even in Nīlācala where They enjoyed pastimes of *prema-saṅkīrtana* with Their associates. Nityānanda would sometimes wander alone all over Nīlācala absorbed in His own ecstasies and constantly chant *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya* .... His loving attachment for Gauracandra knew no limits and His happiness knew no limits!

*But one day Śrī Gaurasundara, the Supreme Lord in the form of a human being, sat down with Nityānanda in a solitary place.*

*The Lord said, "Listen, O magnanimous Nityānanda, go quickly to Navadvīpa! I have personally promised to inundate the fools, the fallen, and the poor in the happiness of ecstatic love. If You also remain silent like a muni and renounce Your magnanimous nature, then tell Me, who will deliver the fools and the wretched souls who have fallen into material life? You are the distributor of the mellows of devotional service. If You hide them, then what is the use of Your incarnation in this world? Now if You wish to fulfill My promise, You should go to Bengal without delay. Deliver the foolish, wretched, fallen, and distressed persons by giving them devotional service."*

*Having received the Lord's order, Nityānanda Candra immediately left for Gauḍa-deśa with His associates.*

—CB Antya 5.222–230



## **An Extraordinary Saṅkīrtana Team!**

*The saṅkīrtana associates of Śrī Nityānanda Rāma were constantly absorbed in ecstatic love.*

*They had no engagement other than to perform saṅkīrtana, and they all became increasingly absorbed in the mood of cowherd boys. They carried sticks, flutes, horns, and ropes, they wore necklaces of guñjā, and they decorated their wrists with bangles and bracelets and their ankles with anklebells. Their bodies were always filled with the ecstasy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and they manifested the symptoms of pure devotional service like crying, shivering, and hairs standing on end. Their beauty was equal to that of Cupid, and they always performed saṅkīrtana.... All the principal associates of Nityānanda were fully empowered. They became omniscient and whatever they spoke came true. Their features resembled those of Cupid. Anyone who was touched by their hands forgot everything and became overwhelmed with ecstasy.*

—CB Antya 5.713-716, 316-318

**When Nityānanda Prabhu was ordered by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to go to Bengal to preach, two devotees were ordered to go with Him. Let's take a brief look at the very special qualities of these two team members.**

### **Abhirāma Ṭhākura**

*By the order of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Abhirāma Ṭhākura became a great ācārya and preacher of the Caitanya cult of devotional service. He was a very influential personality, and nondevotees were very much afraid of him. Empowered by Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, he was always in ecstasy and was extremely kind to all fallen souls.....he was not only a genius in all scriptures, but expert in dancing, music and all musical instruments.....he had a whip called Jaya-Maṅgala and whomever he struck with it would become overwhelmed by ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa. In Kṛṣṇa-līlā, he is Balarāma's dear friend, Śrīdāmā.*

—CC Ādi 11.13p, Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara, 4<sup>th</sup> wave

### **Gadādhara dāsa**

*Śrīla Gadādhara dāsa was always fully absorbed in ecstasy as a gopī..... simply by seeing him, all one's sinful reactions were destroyed. He is considered to be a united form of Candrakānti, who is the effulgence of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and Pūrṇānandā, who is the foremost of Lord Balarāma's very dear girlfriends. Thus Śrīla Gadādhara dāsa Prabhu was one of the associates of both Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu.*

*Once while Śrīla Gadādhara dāsa Prabhu was returning to Bengal from Jagannātha Purī with Nityānanda Prabhu, he forgot himself and began talking very loudly as if he were a girl of Vrajabhūmi selling yogurt. Another time, while absorbed in the ecstasy of the gopīs, he carried a jug filled with Ganges water on his head as if he were selling milk.*

**He is most famous for having induced the cruel Mohammedan Kazi of Navadvīpa to chant the Holy Name.**

—CC Ādi 11.17, CB Antya 5.727, CC Ādi 10.53p

## **Love's Journey**

*Having received the Lord's order, Nityānanda Candra immediately left for Gauḍa-deśa with His associates. As they began their journey, Lord Nityānanda first bestowed ecstatic love upon all of them. As a result, they*

*completely forgot themselves. There was no end to the ecstatic symptoms that manifested in their bodies.*

*The topmost Vaiṣṇava Abhirāma Ṭhākura was the first to manifest the mood of a cowherd boy. Somewhere along the way he forgot the external world and stood for nine hours in a threefold-bending form.*

*Gadādhara dāsa became absorbed in the mood of Śrī Rādhikā. He loudly laughed and said, “Who will buy my yogurt?”*

*The most magnanimous Raghunātha Vaidya Upādhyāya became fully absorbed in the mood of Revatī.*

*Kṛṣṇadāsa and Parameśvarī dāsa would always raise a loud uproar in the mood of cowherd boys.*

*Purandara Paṇḍita would climb a tree and jump from it, declaring, “I am Aṅgada.”*

*In this way Nityānanda, the origin of Ananta, aroused all of the devotees’ transcendental sentiments. Within a half hour they would cover four to eight miles. They did not know whether they were going left or right.*

*After some time they would ask the local people, “O brothers, tell us, how can we reach the Ganges?”*

*Those people would reply, “Alas, you have taken the wrong path. You have come six hours away from the proper path.”*

*After hearing their words, they would return to the right path, but later they would go in the wrong direction once again.*

*Again they would ask the local people, who would reply, “The proper path is twenty miles to the left.”*

*They then laughed and went again towards the proper path. They were not even aware of their own bodies, so what to speak of the road. They did not feel any bodily urges like hunger, thirst, fear, or distress, for they were all relishing transcendental happiness. Who can know or describe all the pastimes that Nityānanda performed along the way? They were all unlimited. In this way Nityānanda, the origin of Lord Ananta, came to the village of Pānihāṭi on the bank of the Ganges.*

# Nitāi's *Prema-saṅkīrtana* Festival Begins

Having arrived at Panihati village on the bank of the Ganges, *Nityānanda*, who was filled with the mellows of ecstatic love, now began His auspicious task of delivering the entire world.

— CB Antya 5.263

*In whatever direction His lotus eyes glanced, there was a shower of ecstatic love that inundated everyone. Just as Lord Haladhara held a club, Nityānanda always held in His hand a beautiful iron rod that looked as if it were silver and that was bound on two sides with gold. His associates decorated themselves with various ornaments like bracelets, bangles, leg bands, anklebells, beautiful necklaces, buffalo horns, sticks, flutes, ropes, and garlands of guñjā, for they were all expansions of the cowherd boys of Vraja.*



*In this way Nityānanda enjoyed His own ecstatic mood as He sported in the company of His associates. The Lord then took them to the houses of various devotees. The most effulgent Nityānanda visited each of the villages on both banks of the Ganges. All living entities became astonished when they saw Him. The most blissful Nityānanda is the combined form of the holy name and form of the Supreme Lord. Even the atheists who saw Him offered Him respects and considered offering everything to Him.*

*The body of Nityānanda Svarūpa was most enchanting. He glanced mercifully on everyone. Whether He was eating, sleeping, or wandering about, He did not waste a moment without saṅkīrtana. Wherever He performed dancing and congregational glorification of Kṛṣṇa, many people became overwhelmed with ecstatic love. Even the householders' children, who did not know anything, uprooted large trees.*

*They roared loudly, uprooted trees, and ran around exclaiming, "I am a cowherd boy."*

*Each boy possessed such strength that even a hundred people were unable to control him. The children would joyfully roar like lions and call out, "All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Nityānanda! All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Nityānanda!"*

*In this way Nityānanda, the life and soul of all the children, overwhelmed them with His ecstatic love. For one month those children did not eat anything. People became struck with wonder on seeing this and all the devotees became overwhelmed with ecstatic love. Nityānanda became the children's sole protector. The Lord would feed the children with His own hand as if they were His own children.*

—CB Antya 5.349 – 369

*In whatever direction Nityānanda cast His love-filled glance, even the men and women floated in the mellows of love for Kṛṣṇa. His glance was filled with such mercy that EVERYONE forgot their own bodies in ecstasy. By Nityānanda's mercy, anyone and everyone relished that devotion which the best of the yogīs and sages desire.*

*In this way Nityānanda Prabhu relished the pastimes of pure devotion for three months in the village of Pānihāti.*

—CB Antya 5.387 – 389, 5.319

# Śrī-Nityānanda-Candrasya-Nāma-Dvādaśakam

## Twelve Names of the Moonlike Nityānanda Prabhu

by Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya

*nityānando 'vadhūtendur vasudhā-prāṇa-vallabhaḥ  
jāhnavī-jīvita-patiḥ, kṛṣṇa-prema-pradaḥ prabhuḥ*

Twelve principal names of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu are:

- \* *Nityānanda* — He who embodies eternal bliss
- \* *Avadhūtendu* — The Moon of divine madmen
- \* *Vasudhā-prāṇa-vallabha* — The beloved of the life-breath of Vasudhā
- \* *Jāhnavī-jīvita-pati* — The husband enthusing Jāhnavī with life
- \* *Kṛṣṇa-prema-prada* — He who bestows ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa
- \* *Prabhu* — The Lord and Master of the devotees

*padmāvatī-sutaḥ śrīmān śacī-nandana-pūrvajaḥ  
bhāvonmatto jagat-trātā, rakta-gaura-kalevaraḥ*

- \* *Padmāvatī-suta* — The dear son of Padmāvatī
- \* *Śrīmān* — He of splendrous transcendental majesty
- \* *Śacī-nandana-pūrvaja* — The elder brother of mother Śacī's son
- \* *Bhāvonmatta* — He who is maddened in overwhelming ecstatic emotions
- \* *Jagat-trātā* — The savior of the universe
- \* *Rakta-gaura-kalevara* — He whose complexion is golden tinged with red

*śrī nityānanda candrasya nāma-dvādaśakam śubham  
ya idaṁ pratyahaṁ prātaḥ pratyutthāya paṭhen naraḥ*

**That person who recites these twelve most auspicious holy names of the moonlike Lord Nityānanda-candra every day upon arising in the morning...**

*sa kleśa-rahito bhūtvā prāpnuyāt sva-mano-ratham  
tūrṇaṁ caitanya-devasya, karuṇā-bhājanam bhavet*

.....such a person becomes free from all difficulties and attains all their most cherished desires. Very soon they become the object of Lord Caitanya-deva's mercy.