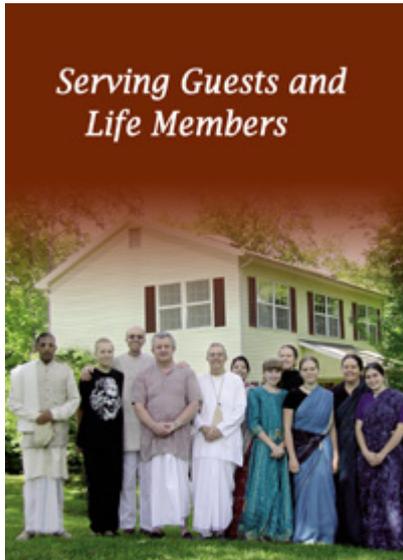


Serving Guests and Life Members



A Vaisnava's heart is very pure and a pure hearted person is extremely magnanimous. So one's Vaisnavism will be judged by the degree of his magnanimity.

General

01. Any guests who visit are Srila Prabhupada's guests. As his servants it is our pleasure (and duty) to serve them.

02. The arrival of a guest is a chance to introduce a conditioned soul to Srila Prabhupada or relish Vaishnava association. Vaisnavas feel joy and gratitude to be blessed with such an opportunity.

03. Krsna consciousness is synonymous with personalism. We need to step beyond the bodily conception and remember that everyone is a part and parcel of Krsna and is very dear to Him. We show this practically by:

a) welcoming the guest with sweet words, a seat and prasada, (if no prasada is available at least a glass of water should be offered.)



- b) being prepared to give our time and sincere concern,
- c) remaining Krsna conscious in our discussions and dealings,
- d) thanking the guest for his visit and inviting him to please come again.

04. Essentially, our mood should be one of loving exchange.

05. Spontaneous service is encouraged in the visitor by the sensitive, pure preaching of the devotee. Every guest should at least be engaged by hearing the glories of Srila Prabhupada, relishing prasada and chanting the Holy Name.

06. The natural reciprocation of the soul to such engagement is a desire to share the happiness experienced. The expert preacher will facilitate this by offering prasada, temple invitations or literature to the guest to distribute to his friends and relatives.

Receiving Guests in the Temple

When we actually see people coming to our centre, chant, dance, take prasada, becoming jubilant and purchase books, we know that certainly Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is always present in such transcendental activities and He is very pleased and satisfied. **Adi-lila 9.50**

Purport



Quotes from Srila Prabhupada

Story of Surabhi Swami and Jayapataka Swami

One day while Srila Prabhupada was in Bombay, he simultaneously had visitors from Vrndavana and Mayapur. This was during a period when temple construction was going on in both places, so Prabhupada expected his disciples in those places to come ask him for money. And the disciples knew that Prabhupada would be expecting and demanding results from them on these important construction projects. But when these disciples visited from distant places, Prabhupada always first welcomed them according to Vaishnava etiquette. Prabhupada had said that his mission was like a war on Maya, and so he received his own soldiers from the field by first offering them sweet words and relief. He asked them if they had taken any prasadam, and he suggested that they might want to rest. At least for a few minutes, the immediate, pressing problems were put aside, as Prabhupada's disciples basked in the sweetness of his darsana and his kind welcome. **SP Nectar 3.1**

"You should always be able to offer water, hot puris and eggplant bhaji, and sweets," Prabhupada said. Even when guests appeared shy, Prabhupada would insist they take a full meal. **Lilamrta Volume V p. 144**

During the train ride to Calcutta, Srila Prabhupada reiterated his displeasure with the mismanaged ISKCON pandal at Kumbha-mela. Thousands of guests were coming to the Hare Krsna pandal without receiving prasadam. Determined that the bad example not be repeated, he dictated a letter, "To all ISKCON Temple Presidents."

"Please accept my blessings. Now you must arrange in each temple there must be sufficient stock of prasadam for distribution. You can keep first-class cooks, two or three, and they should always be engaged. Whenever any guests comes, he must get prasad. This arrangement must be made, that the cooks prepare 10-20 servings at a time, of puris and sabji, and then you can add halava and pakoras and the visitors may be supplied immediately. Whenever a gentleman comes, he must be served. As the twenty servings are being distributed, immediately the cooks prepare another 20 servings and store it. At the end of the day if no one comes, our men will take, so there is no loss. You cannot say, "It is finished," "It is not cooked yet," "There is no supply for cooking," etc. This must be enforced rigidly.

*The temple is managed by Srimati Radharani, Laksmiji; so why should there be want? Our philosophy is, if anyone comes, let him take prasad, chant Hare Krsna, and be happy. Everything is being supplied by Krsna. Krsna is not poor, so why should we deny them? This should be done at any cost. There is no difficulty. It simply requires nice management. At the end of the day you may sell or give away. If we believe that Krsna is providing for and maintaining everyone, then why should we be misers? This means losing faith in Krsna and thinking that we are the doers and suppliers. We are confident that Krsna will supply! Let the whole world come. We can feed them. So please do this nicely. Begin at once." **Lilamrta Volume VI p. 232, letter: January 1977***