

KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2019

SERVICE TO RADHA-
DAMODARA UNITES
ALL LIVING BEINGS.



The month of Kartik has two more nights of opportunity in store for us. I'm thinking of my health crash down, when I was unable to do anything any longer. Still I decided: *'Let me go into my little temple room and offer a lamp to Lord Damodara, dead or alive. I want to do this, it has eternal value.'* The body comes and goes, mental states and life situations change constantly. During all of this change we should endeavor to put Krishna in the center.

A few days ago I did a Govardhan *parikrama* (circumambulation of Govardhana hill), and arrived at a small Damodara-temple during a power cut. It was stark dark. Nevertheless, I went into the direction of the altar and saw big, unidentifiable heaps scattered on the ground in the temple room. I walked around the big, dark shades and came before the altar. Flooded by warm candle light, the beautiful forms of Radha Damodara looked at me. Their priest was next to them, I have seen him here for about thirty years. He has become elderly, and when he smiles, you see only one tooth in his mouth. He is so dedicated to his service that he spreads an infectious atmosphere in the temple. Many devotees like visiting this tiny temple because the Deities shine with life due to Their reciprocation with the priest.

After a while, the electricity returned and I looked around the temple. What did I see? The big heaps were bulls, cows and calves. They stayed in the temple amongst the humans. Some people rested on the floor next to the cows. Indians are very hospitable, they think: *'We all belong to the same family, the family of God.'* It was an inviting interspecies friendship. Why? Because Radha Damodara Who are served so devotedly by this priest over the many years are in the center, they unite all living beings - Bengalis, Westerners (I think I was the only one there with my assistant), cows and calves. Only the monkeys were not present, they are in their own world.

Placing Krishna in the center, worshiping Him with focus, endeavoring to please Him, keeping Him in the core of our heart and thinking of Him like we think of the most beloved person, creates a very attractive atmosphere around us to which everyone is attracted. Kartik has taught us this - putting Krishna in the center of our attention. Let us hold on to this lesson for the rest of the year.