**Deity flowers & Covid-19**

* **Questions and Answers / Badrinarayan Swami and Nrsimha Kavaca prabhu (ISKCON’s minister for Deity worship)**

***Badrinarayan Swami / BnS:***

*Hare Krishna. I have a head pujari asking me if they should continue to purchase flowers at the flower market and use these to make garlands for the Deities. The alternative is no garlands or garlands made from ribbons or plastic flowers. Being only early Spring, there are no leaves on the trees and bushes yet so they cannot use these for making garlands.*

**Nrsimha Kavaca prabhu / NKp: Forget the plastic.**

Better no garlands than garlands made of plastic.

It really depends on how many devotees are available for service.

If there is a reduced number of devotees available, then trim non-essential services so the most important services can be maintain. This pandemic is likely to drag on for a while so we need to protect the devotees as best we can and not overload them with too much service.

***BnS:***

*Here in San Diego, they are buying a week’s worth of flowers at a time and using less but staying with fresh flowers. What is your advice?*

**NKp**

: Don’t take any risks. According to the medicos, this virus is 10 times more contagious than anything experienced so far.

Attached is the IDWM advice on managing deity service during this challenging time.

Stay well. May the Lord be with you.

* **Badrinarayan Swami / Update**

I spoke with Svavas prabhu and in New Dwaraka they are buying less flowers, using smaller, simpler garlands, and most importantly—they give all the flowers a rinse and then leave them in buckets in the back area outside the pujari room for a day or two to let the sun disinfect the flowers before they use the flowers.

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