A Dynamic Trio
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RELIGION

A Dynamic Trio

The Gossai brothers' innovative teaching style inspires young and old to love Hinduism

Geeta Maraj, Canada

Prakash Chand Gossai is the youngest of three brothers, and the most prominent in the Hindu community. "Knowledge of our culture and religion, compounded by a solid education, is the key to societal success," says Prakash. His pragmatic approach employs concepts from the scriptures and applies them to everyday life. He also leads devotional songs and has captured the interest of the young and old alike. Prakash lives in New York, but travels to many countries conducting sermons including Canada, the West Indies, South America and almost every state in the US.

Prakash, along with his elder brothers Bankim and Deo Chand Gossai, all grew up in Guyana. Bankim, despite a very demanding accounting job, contributes selflessly to his community in an effort to educate and preserve Hinduism. In 1999, he founded the Maha Lakshmi Vidya Bhavan temple in London, England. "Our children are our future investment in our religion and culture. We must emphasize Hinduism and

provide them with opportunities to learn."

Bankim also participates in charitable work, supporting the poor and sick, as well as giving free music and Hindi classes. He lectures on religion and music at many universities and colleges in London. Each year, he travels to the West Indies, Canada and the United States conducting sermons and yajnas, or fire ceremonies. Like Prakash, he approaches sermons with a practical flair coupled with a musical talent. He feels it is through this medium that he attracts the younger generation. He sees his efforts not as hard work, but as a form of devotion to the feet of his Lord. "Let our actions be our puja," Bankim says.

Prakash has produced many CDs, cassettes and books in an effort to teach philosophy and arouse interest in Hindu culture and traditions. His ability to trigger your inner cry for spiritual enlightenment is addictive and will keep you forever yearning for his teachings. "We must always try to see goodness in all, even our enemies, and to have faith and trust in the Supreme who guides our path," said Prakash. In April 2002, Prakash received three awards at the Devi Mandir in Ontario, Canada. The first award was given on behalf of the Premiere of Ontario for his contributions to the Hindu community of Ontario. The second award was given by the Hindu Federation and the third by the Devi Mandir. "There are many priests and spiritual leaders who contribute selflessly to Hinduism," said Prakash, "They deserve these awards more than I do. On their behalf, I accept these honors you have given me."

Deo Chand Gossai, the eldest, offers unflinching support to his

brothers and their quest to spread the teachings of Hinduism. Both Prakash and Bankim admire him for his gentle manner, which they find inspiring. They feel that their eldest brother sets the ultimate example, in that his natural calmness, humility and love are the qualities we seek in all religions. Deo Chand Gossai is popular among his fellow New Yorkers for his singing talent, especially on religious occasions. "Doing my puja (worship) in the mornings and supporting others in any way I can is my small contribution to my religion," said Deo.