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# "Once" star becomes a Hare Krishna

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Glen Hansard, star of the hit Irish movie "Once" and lead singer of The Frames  
Photo by Haydn West/PA

Like the character he plays in the Academy-Award winning movie "Once," [Glen Hansard](#) began his career singing with his guitar on the streets of [Dublin](#) for small change.

And, as seen in the movie, he sometimes shared the streets with members of the enthusiastic Hare Krishna sect, a group that dances in circles chanting their favorite name of god. But what the movie does not reveal is that [Hansard](#) is himself a Hare Krishna follower.

"What I like about Hare Krishnas is that you eat, you dance, and you sing your way to God," he explained.

In 1991, Hansard formed the Irish rock [band The Frames](#), and they released their last album in 2007. That same year, Hansard was the first Irishman to ever win an Oscar for the Best Song category. The song "Falling Slowly," was in the soundtrack of the movie "Once," a modern day musical about a Busker and a woman who write, rehearse and record songs that tell their love story.

Hansard spoke about his faith to a group of [Columbia University](#) journalism students on board a [Dublin-New York](#) flight in late March. The students were returning from a trip in [Ireland](#) in March, where they reported for their religion class. (Visit their site, "[Beyond the Brogue](#)")

Hansard, shoeless and sipping tea comfortably in coach, had just attended his father's funeral in [Ireland](#) and wasn't interested in talking about his career. ("That's boring," he dismissed.) But he was eager to share his thoughts on spirituality and his conversion to the Hare Krishna faith.

Hansard, 39, dropped out of school at age 13 to devote himself to his music career, which started with busking in the streets of [Dublin](#). One day, he befriended a group of Hare Krishnas, who had asked him to take care of their instruments and sweets while they distributed [Krishna](#) literature. His spiritual mind was immediately taken by the chants and the beliefs of [Krishna](#).

His spiritual path to the Hare Krishnas was an unlikely one. Hansard was born into a Catholic family that he said always had a love-hate relationship with the religion. His parents were only 16 when his mother got pregnant with him; they ran away from home to escape their conservative Catholic families.

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