

Welcome to Bal-Gokul



Gokul is the place where an ordinary cowherd boy blossomed into a divine incarnation. It is here that Krishna's magical days of childhood were spent and his powers came to be recognized.

Every child has that spark of divinity within. Bal-Gokul is a forum for children to discover and manifest that divinity. Bal-Gokul will enable Hindu children in the US to appreciate their cultural roots, learn Hindu values in an enjoyable manner and make good friends. They will also develop a sense of Sewa, Service to humankind.

Our Goals are ...

- To facilitate children to appreciate, learn and practice Hindu way of life.
- Instill pride and confidence in Hindu children about their identity.
- Raise Hindu awareness in the society around.
- Develop social awareness and leadership skills among children.

Activities In BalGokul



Children will have lots of fun while they learn. Activities are planned for their physical, intellectual, social and spiritual development. Weekly activities include:

Games **Yoga**
Arts **Crafts** **Stories** **Bhajans** **Shlokas**

"Let positive, strong, helpful thought enter into their brains from very childhood"
 - Swami Vivekananda

कार्य सिद्धि - kārya siddhi

(Before starting any work, Pray to Bhagawan Ganesha)

शुक्लाम्बरधरं विष्णुम् ।	śuklāambaradharam viṣṇum ।
शशिवर्णं चतुर्भुजम् ॥	śaśivarṇam caturbhujam ।।
प्रसन्नवदनं ध्यायेत् ।	prasannavadanam dhyāyet ।
सर्वं विघ्नोऽपशान्तये ॥	sarva vighno'paśāntaye ।।

For the removal of all the obstacles in my effort, I meditate upon Bhagawan Ganesha, who wears a white garment, who is all pervading, who has a bright complexion (like a full moon), who has four shoulders, who has an ever-smiling face.

पठन समये - paṭhana samaye

(Before commencing Studies)

सरस्वति नमस्तुभ्यम् ।	sarasvati namastubhyam ।
वरदे कामरूपिणि ॥	varade kāmarūpiṇi ।।
विद्यारम्भं करिष्यामि ।	vidyārambham kariṣyāmi ।
सिद्धिर्भवतु मे सदा ॥	siddhirbhavatu me sadā ।।

Oh Bhagawati Sarasvati, I bow to you, the fulfiller of my wishes. I begin my studies seeking your blessings so that I shall always be successful.

प्रातः स्मरणम् - prātaḥ smaraṇam

(Morning Prayer)

कराग्रे वसते लक्ष्मीः ।	karāgre vasate lakṣmīḥ ।
करमध्ये सरस्वती ॥	karamadhye sarasvatī ।।
करमूले तु गोविन्दः ।	karamūle tu govindaḥ ।
प्रभाते करदर्शनम् ॥	prabhāte karadarśanam ।।

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Bhagawati Lakshmi dwells at the tip of the hand. In the center of the palm resides Sarasvati, the Bhagawati of wisdom. At the base of the palm is Govinda. Hence, one should look and meditate on the hand early in the morning.

भूमि वन्दना - bhūmi vandanā

(Salutations to Mother Earth)

समुद्रवासने देवि ।	samudravasane devi ।
पर्वतस्तन मण्डले ॥	parvatastana maṇḍale ।।
विष्णुपत्नि नमस्तुभ्यम् ।	viṣṇupatni namastubhyam ।
पादस्पर्श क्षमस्व मे ॥	pādasparśam kṣamasva me ।।

Forgive me mother earth for I have to step on you. O Mother, my salutations to you, who is covered by the oceans, whose breasts are the mountains and who is the consort of Bhagawan Vishnu.

निद्रा समये – nidraa samaye

(Before going to sleep)

वसुदेव सुतं देवम् ।	vasudeva sutam devam ।
कंसचाणूर मर्दनम् ॥	kaṁsacāṇūra mardanam ।।
देवकी परमानन्दम् ।	devakī paramānandam ।
कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुम् ॥	kṛṣṇam vande jagadgurum ।।

I bow to Sri Krishna, son of Vasudeva, the divine being, guru of the entire world, the killer of wicked Kamsa and Chanoora, and the source of happiness to mother Devaki.

Basic Characteristics of Dharma

धृतिः क्षमा दमोऽस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।

धीर्विद्या सत्यमक्रोधो दशकं धर्मलक्षणम् ॥

dhṛtiḥ kṣamā damosteyam śoucama indriaya nigrahaḥ,
dhīrvidhyā satyamakrodho daśakam dharmalakṣaṇam.

Steadfastness, forgiveness, control over desires, non-stealing, cleanliness, control over senses, intelligence, knowledge, truthfulness and not getting angry: These are the ten essentials (manifestations) of Dharma.

|| Selections from Veda Mantras ||

May all live happily

सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः ।

sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ ।

सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ॥

sarve santu nirāmayāḥ ।।

सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु ।

sarve bhadraṇi paśyantu ।

मा कश्चित् दुःखभाग्भवेत् ॥

mā kaścit duḥkhabhāgbhavet

।।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ ।।

May all live happily. May all enjoy good health. May all see auspiciousness. May none experience distress. May peace prevail everywhere.

Take Me From darkness to light

ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय ।

om asato mā sadgamaya ।

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ॥

tamaso mā jyotirgamaya ।।

मृत्योर्मा अमृतङ्गमय ।

mṛtyormā amṛtaṅgamaya ।

om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ ।।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

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Bhagawan, lead me from untruth to Truth; Take me from darkness to light; from death to immortality. Let there be peace all around.

शान्ति मन्त्रः - śānti mantrāḥ (Mantras for Peace)

The following verses are all śānti mantras. The śānti mantra is recited for peace. It is traditionally recited before chanting other mantras, before we begin the studies and at the beginning of any program.

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम् पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

om pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidam pūrṇāt pūrṇamudacyate ।

pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate ।

om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ ।।

OM! That is Full. This is Full. From that Full, this Full has come; when this Full is taken from that Full It always remains Full! Om Peace, Peace, Peace!



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ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु ।
 सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।
 तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु ।
 मा विद्विषावहै ।
 ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

om saha nāvavatu ।
 saha nau bhunaktu ।
 saha vīryam karavāvahai ।
 tejasvināvadhītamastu ।
 mā vidviṣāvahāi ।
 om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ । ।

May Bhagwan protect both of us. May we be nourished together. May we work together. May our studies be brilliant. May we not fight with each other.

Peace. Peace. Peace.

(Note: Here the phrase 'both of us' refer to the teacher and student. This mantra captures the very essence of teaching and learning. Learning is a joint exploration by the Guru and the disciples. The phrase 'our studies' says that it's not the all-knowing teacher teaching the ignorant student, but both making a joint effort in understanding.)