
Contents

<i>Mool Mantar</i>	2
Message from the Governor-General	3
Note from Dya Singh Ji	4
Tentative Daily Program	5
Guidelines for Participants	6
<i>Kirtan</i> Competition	7
Camp Quiz - Dya Singh	7
Theme of the Camp	9
World Religions	12
Guru Ka Langar	20
<i>Sikh Ardas – Sarbat da Bhalaa</i>	21
The <i>Ardas</i> – Translation	23
Understanding the SRM: The <i>Ardas</i>	25
Our National Anthem	31
Theme <i>Shabad</i> - " <i>Aagya Bhayee Akaal Kee</i> "	32
More <i>Shabads</i> :	
" <i>Avoh Sikh Satigur(u) Ke Piariho</i> "	33
Khalsa Anthem - " <i>Dayh Shivaa</i> ".....	33
Game of Love - " <i>Jau Tau Praym</i> "	34
Prayer Before Meals – " <i>Dadaa Daataa ek hai</i> "	35
Nishan Sahib Selami – " <i>Degh Tegh Fateh</i> "	35
My Resolutions - ' <i>Meri Pertigya</i> '	36
My Notes	37
Contact Information	40

Mool Mantar

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ik-Oⁿkaar

One Universal Creator God

ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ

sat' naam kartaa purakh nirbha-o nirvair

The Name Is Truth. Creative Being Personified. No Fear. No Hatred.

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

akaa! moorat ajoonee saibhan gur parsaad.

Image Of The Undying, Beyond Birth, Self-Existent. By Guru's Grace.

॥ ਜਪੁ ॥

jap.

Chant And Meditate:

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥

aad sach jugaad sach.

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages.

ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

hai bhee sach naanak hosee bhee sach ||1||

True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True.

Message from the Governor General

Note from Dya Singh Ji

Dear Youth Camp Attendee,

A very warm Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!

It is with pleasure that we present the curriculum for the SYCA Camp for 2005 from 10 JANUARY to 14 JANUARY 2005.

I CHOOSE TO BE A SIKH. This is the statement we shall, each of us, be exploring at this camp besides having a great deal of fun and carrying out our routine Sikh practices like kirtan (O Yes, the competition is definitely on again in 2005!), Nitnam and generally learning more about our faith. We will attempt to discover the unique features of our faith in line with comparisons with other major faiths. We look forward to plenty of input into our discussions and comparisons with Sikhism.

We will restrict ourselves to Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism.

It is important that we are familiar with the practices of our neighbours so that we can be a part of the ideal tolerant society that we have in Australia. But, it is also important that we are familiar with our own faith Sikhism so that each of us is an ambassador of the universal truths of Nanak.

So let us enjoy each other's company once again and also learn more about spirituality and our faith.

Cherdhi Kala and Waheguru Ji's blessings,

Uncle Dya Singh

Tentative Daily Program

Delivered in English and Punjabi, subject to minor changes by the organizers as they see fit.

5.00 am	Wake up call
6.00 am	Naam Simran
6.30 am	Nitnem – Jap Ji, Ardas, Hukumnama
7.15 am	Announcements for the day
7.30 am	Breakfast
8.30 am	Selaami
9.00 am	Inspiration Session (all groups)
10.15 am	Break
10.30 am	First Individual Group Session
11.30 am	Second Individual Group Session
12.30 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm	Games and team building sessions
4.30 pm	Shower and afternoon tea
5.15 pm	Third Individual Group Session
6.00 pm	Dinner
7.15 pm	Rehras
7.30 pm	Rehras Explanation
8.00 pm	Kirtan Competition
9.15 pm	Indoor Sports Competition
11.00 pm	Lights off

Guidelines for Participants

1. General

- a. Participants are to cover their head at all times.
- b. Participants must remove their footwear before entering the Darbar Sahib.
- c. Participants are to wear decent clothing.
- d. Participants are to remain within the camp boundaries throughout the whole camp.
- e. Participants, who need to leave the camp for any reason, please refer to the organizing committee for further advice.
- f. Participants should refer to any counsellors if they encounter any problems.
- g. Participants should be punctual at all times.
- h. Participants are to attend all activities and programs as scheduled.
- i. Male and female participants must remain strictly within their respective dormitories.
- j. Each participant is allocated one bed. Please keep to your own bed.
- k. Participants must follow the instructions of counsellors at all times.
- l. Participants are to wear their nametags at all times.

2. Darbar Sahib/Hall Manners

- a. Please cover your heads in the Darbar Sahib at all times.
- b. Strict silence must be maintained in the Darbar Sahib.
- c. Please handle the Nitnam Gutkas with full respect. Gutkas may be kept on your laps but must not to be put on the floor.
- d. Wash your hands and feet before you proceed to the Darbar Sahib.
- e. Any form of vandalism will be dealt with severely.

3. Dormitories

- a. Food, drinks and footwear are to remain outside the dorms and cleanliness in the dorms is to be maintained.
- b. Seek the sevadars if there are any problems.

4. Telephones

- a. A public telephone is available.
- b. All mobile phones are to be turned off for the duration of the camp.
- c. Contact a counsellor if you need to make a call.

Kirtan Competition

The Kirtan Competition is on again. May the best Jatha win this highly competitive event.

Marks will be given for:

1. General presentation – presenting a good image. Can shabads be heard with clarity?
2. Control of voices (musical pitch)
3. Keeping to rhythm

Extra marks will be awarded if you have your own dedicated percussionist – tabla or dholki player.

The Youth Camp Committee can only do any variations to the rules.

Camp Quiz – Dya Singh

On the last day of the camp there will be a CAMP QUIZ. Prizes will be given to the winning team/Jatha. Below are the rules, parameters and conditions of the Quiz. May the best team win!!!

1. The Camp Quiz will be based on all that you are going to learn at the camp and also all the information in the Samelan Guide.
2. Uncle Dya Singh Ji will be the Quizmaster. He will set all questions.
3. A 'Panel of Judges' will oversee all proceedings and will have the power to overrule answers or decisions of the Quiz Master.

4. All Camp Participants will be divided into five groups of equal numbers. Each group will consist of equal numbers of youngsters below age 12 and above age 12.
5. Questions will be set in the Senior (above 12) and the Junior (below 12) categories.
6. Each group must give answers after consultation. Each group will nominate one group member to answer. Answers must be given in rotation.
7. Senior category questions can be answered by any member of the group (in rotation). Junior Category questions can only be answered by members below age 12 but they may be prompted by other group members (senior or junior).
8. Each group can only give one answer - so careful consultation is advised.
9. A correct answer by the group to whom a question is posed gets 5 points. If their answer is incorrect, the second group asked in rotation gets 3 points. The third group asked gets a maximum of 2 points and the fourth group 1 point. A second round of the same question will receive 1 point only. Consolation-prize questions asked at random receive 1 consolation-prize point.
10. Groups will be asked questions in rotation and the Quiz Master will specify whether it is a 'senior' question or a 'junior' question.
11. Questions will be asked as set down by the Quiz Master.
12. Any participant caught cheating in any way will be tortured by tickling and their group will lose points as decided by the judges!

Theme of the Camp

"I Choose to be a Sikh"

The theme of this year's (2005) annual Camp is - **I choose to be a Sikh**. In a brainstorming session with some learned Sikh friends, the following special features came up to assert the theme and in answer to the question - "Why Sikhism for me?"

These are not exhaustive and participants will be encouraged to add on to the list after discussions. Participants will get the chance to explore basic features of other major faiths and hold discussions in comparing with Sikhism.

SIKHISM SAYS:

1. God is 'truth'. He is the one true source of reality. The creator. He is infinite, unborn, undying. He is beyond time, space and form. He is merciful, without fear and without revenge. He is the Enlightener.
2. Our 'Guru Sahibs' claimed to be His (God's) servants - not His sons, nor His prophets. They claimed to be just the messengers of His word. Guru Gobind Singh even went to the extent of declaring that anyone 'worshipping' them would go to hell!
3. The 'word of God', (Gurbani), the Sikh scriptures are the 'guru' - the teacher. The 'word of God' was written down by the Guru Sahibs, during their lifetime and NOT written after the 'masters' had passed away. Therefore the scriptures are authentic and true.
4. Sikhs have been gifted with 'direct access' to God. There are no official 'middlemen' (like priests) for Sikhs to seek out, to be able to pray to God. In fact, the entire crusade of our 'Guru Sahibans' was against the tyranny of middlemen who positioned themselves between Man and God.

5. Sikhs are encouraged to do Nitnam/Naam Simran/Prayer to God before the sun comes up (in the ambrosial hours) and at dusk and before going to sleep. BUT, Sikhs are encouraged to 'contemplate His name' with every breath.
6. Sikhs look upon all religions as pathways to God. A Sikh will never claim that his religion is the best, to the detriment of others. So a Sikh does not look down upon followers of other religions. He/she does not just 'tolerate' other faiths/religions but fully 'accepts' them as pathways to God, and 'accepts' followers of other faiths as equals.

PROOF:

- A. The Ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur, gave his life so that Hindus could practice their religion in peace.
 - B. The foundation stone of the holiest of Sikh shrines, the Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) was laid by a Muslim saint, Mian Mir.
 - C. The Sikh scriptures and Guru Granth Sahib, contain the 'revealed word' of God through not only Sikh 'gurus' but also Hindu saints and Muslim saints.
7. The concept of 'Langar' is unique to Sikhism.
 8. Equality is strongly emphasised. Equality between man and woman and full respect for non-Sikhs. In fact there is greater emphasis of the 'feminine' qualities like compassion, love and mercy. The congregation is the feminine equivalent to God being masculine. Women have equal rights to conduct religious ceremonies within a Sikh congregation.
 9. Sikhs do not have to visit any special places of pilgrimage. The greatest pilgrimage is the one 'within'.
 10. Sikhs do not have to pray in a certain direction because God is everywhere.
 11. Sikhs are not forced into any practices like circumcision, or any other form of bodily marking or disfigurement.

12. Sikhs do not have to carry 'magical' amulets nor believe in such practices, as there is direct access to God.
13. Sikhs shall not put fear into anyone, nor fear anyone. That means Sikhs will not oppress anyone, nor tolerate an oppressor.
14. Sikhs shall not pray at graves or to ancestors or to deities. Prayer shall be directly to God the All-Giver. Sikhs do not worship idols, but protect the rights of those who do.
15. There is no conversion - forcible or through any form of coercion like promises of a place in heaven or financial help or emotional support etc. of non-Sikhs. But, a convert is made welcome. A Sikh will not show favour to a fellow Sikh over a non-Sikh except based on merit.
16. There is no special place called heaven or hell. No material promises are made for good deeds. Depending on past actions and present conduct, life right here can become 'heaven' or 'hell'. A state of enlightenment is what 'heaven' is. One does not have to wait for death to go to hell or heaven.
17. Sikhs do not seek to be 'saved' as Sikhs do not hold themselves out as sinners. However, Sikhs seek enlightenment and a 'place at God's feet'.
18. Sikhism does not encourage a 'flock' mentality but focuses on individual development. 'Seva lakh se aik ledaun, tebhi Gobind Singh naam kehaun.'
19. Sikhs are not anti-ritualism, but anti 'meaningless' ritualism. The adage- 'I do it because my forefathers did it'. Question - Why? Answer-'I don't know!' or "So 'n' so said so" does not hold with Sikhism. Protocol and uniformity does play a part in portraying a sense of belonging.
20. In summary, Sikhism is about Naam Simran (meditation), Kirat Karni (honest living) and Wand Shakana (sharing your earnings with the underprivileged).

Dya Singh (Australia) January 2005

World Religions

Following are some general explanations* about the different world religions. We suggest that you read them to help you better prepare for discussion.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism is a religion, which is, based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the son of a wealthy landowner born in northern India around 560 B.C. In order to achieve spiritual peace, Gautama renounced his worldly advantages and became known as Buddha, or "the enlightened one". He preached his religious views his entire life throughout South Asia.

Basic Beliefs of Buddhism:

The basic beliefs of Buddhism can be demonstrated in the following concepts and doctrines:

Buddhist Precepts:

There are five precepts taught by Buddhism that all Buddhists should follow:

- Kill no living thing.
- Do not steal.
- Do not commit adultery.
- Tell no lies.
- Do not drink intoxicants or take drugs.

Other precepts apply only to monks and nuns:

- Eat moderately and only at the appointed time.
- Avoid that which excites the senses.
- Do not wear adornments.
- Do not sleep in luxurious beds.
- Accept no silver or gold.

Sacred Scriptures:

In Theravada (Southeast Asian) Buddhism, there are three groups of writings considered to be Holy Scripture, known as the "Three Baskets" (Tripitaka). The Vinaya Pitaka (discipline basket) contains rules for the higher class of Buddhists; the Sutta Pitaka (teaching basket) contains the discourses of Buddha; and the Abidhamma Pitaka (metaphysical basket) contains Buddhist theology.

Mahayana (Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, etc.) Buddhism contains an incredibly large number of holy writings, over five thousand volumes. The oldest scriptures are based on Sanskrit, while others have been written in Nepalese, Tibetan, and Chinese. There are no clear limits as to what should be admitted as scripture, so thousands of writings on the topic have been admitted.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is based upon the teachings of Jesus, a Jew who lived his life in the Roman province of Palestine. Roman communications networks enabled Christianity to spread quickly throughout the Roman Empire and eventually to the rest of Europe, and finally the entire globe.

Basic Beliefs of Christianity:

The central figure in Christianity is Jesus (or Christ), a Jew who came into this world by Immaculate Conception to a virgin named Mary. His birth is celebrated at Christmas with hymns and gift giving. This man was not only man, but also the Son of God and lived his life without sin.

During his lifetime, Jesus performed many miracles and spoke to many people about his father in heaven. He was arrested for claiming to be God's son and was hanged on the cross by the Romans at age 33. Christians believe that the suffering and death upon the cross, which this sinless man endured, paid for the sins of all mankind, and because of Jesus' actions, salvation can be achieved by anyone who believes in him. This act of sacrifice is remembered during Lent.

Following his death, Christians believe that he rose from the grave (celebrated at Easter) and returned to the Earth, appearing to his followers and telling them of the kingdom of God to which he was going. He also promised his disciples

that he would return one day to bring all believers with him to that kingdom, to enjoy eternal life in the presence of God.

Christians can read of the life of Jesus, as well as his ancestors in the only **Christian holy text**, the Bible. It consists of the Old Testament (which is also considered sacred to Judaism and Islam) and the New Testament. The Old Testament chronicles the lives of Jews and others who lived before Jesus, who had been promised a savior by God, and were waiting for him. This text contains many stories about people demonstrating faith in God and also provides historical information about the era. The New Testament is unique to Christianity, for it centers around the figure of Jesus and his effect on the world. Christians believe that Jesus is the one that the Old Testament foretold, so instead of looking for a savior, they await the return of Jesus so that he can take them to his kingdom, or heaven.

The beliefs of Christianity can be seen in the words of the Apostle's Creed, a document that was written to distinguish Christianity from other religions and show basic Christian doctrine in a concise manner.

The Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ,
His only Son, our Lord;
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell;
The third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy Christian Church,

The Communion of Saints,
The Forgiveness of sins,
The Resurrection of the body,

And the Life everlasting.
Amen.

HINDUISM

Hinduism is the oldest and most complex of all religious systems. Providing an adequate history for the development of Hinduism is difficult, since it has no specific founder or theology and originated in the religious practices of Aryan tribes who moved to India from central Asia more than three thousand years ago. The Aryans attacked the Harappan people who lived in modern day India around 1500 B.C. Eventually, through adaptation to the religious beliefs of the other, both groups developed similar religious belief systems, founded on the polytheism of the Aryans and the sanctity of fertility of the Harappans.

Basic Beliefs of Hinduism:

Hinduism is based on the concept that human and animal spirits reincarnate, or come back to earth to live many times in different forms. The belief that souls move up and down an infinite hierarchy depending on the behaviors they practiced in their life is visible in many of the Hindu societal policies. The caste system survives and charity towards others is unheard of because each individual deserves to be in the social class of birth. A person is born into the highest class because of good behaviours in a past life, and a person is born into poverty and shame because of misbehaviors in a past life.

Today, a Hindu can be polytheistic (more than one god), monotheistic (one god), Pantheistic (god and the universe are one), agnostic (unsure if god exists), or atheistic (no god) and still claim to be Hindu. This open theology makes it difficult to discuss basic beliefs since there are many ideas about what Hinduism means. However, these universal ideas must be mentioned.

Central to Hinduism are the concepts of reincarnation, the caste system, merging with brahman (or the ultimate reality), finding morality, and reaching Nirvana (the peaceful escape from the cycle of reincarnation).

Religious documents include Sruti, (what is heard) and Smriti, (what is remembered). The Sruti include deeply religious things communicated to a seer and recorded. The Vedas, the religious writings, include mantras (hymns of praise), brahmanas (sacrificial rituals) and upanishads (108 sacred teachings). The Smriti include the law (books of laws), puranas (myths, stories, legends) and epics (sets of holy myths including Ramayana and Mahabharata).

The Hindu paths to salvation include the way of works (rituals), the way of knowledge (realization of reality and self-reflection), and the way of devotion (devotion to the god that you choose to follow). If the practitioner follows the paths of these ways, salvation can be achieved.

ISLAM

The history of Islam centers around the last prophet of Islam i.e. Prophet Muhammad (May Peace and Blessings Be Upon him-SAW). He was born around 570 A.D. and was raised by his extended family after the death of his parents. As he grew, he became dissatisfied with polytheism and came to believe in one God, Allah. He began to have religious visions around age 40. During these visions, Muhammad would receive "messages" or "revelations" from God. He would memorize them and teach them to his followers. These visions are now recorded in the Qur'an. Muhammad continued to receive these visions until his death in 632 A.D.

Basic Beliefs of Islam:

The teachings of Islam are comprised of both faith and duty (din). One branch of Muslim learning, "Tawhid", defines all that a man should believe, while the other branch, "Shari'a", prescribes everything that he should do. There is no priesthood and no sacraments. Except among the Sufis, Muslims receive instruction only from those who consider themselves adequately learned in theology or law.

The five articles of faith are the main doctrines of Islam. All Muslims are expected to believe the following:

God. There is one true God and his name is Allah.

Angels. Angels exist and interact with human lives. They are comprised of light, and each has different purposes or messages to bring to earth. Each man or woman has two angels who record his actions; one records good deeds, the other bad deeds.

Scripture. There are four inspired books, the Torah of Moses, the Psalms (Zabin) of David, the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Injil) and the Qur'an. All but the Qur'an has been corrupted by Jews and Christians.

Prophets. God has spoken through numerous prophets throughout time. The six greatest are: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. Muhammad is the last and greatest of Allah's messengers.

Last Days. On the last day there will be a time of resurrection and judgment. Those who follow Allah and Muhammad will go to Islamic heaven, or Paradise. Those who do not will go to hell.

The five pillars of faith are observances in Islam, which are duties each Muslim must perform.

Creed (Kalima) - One must state, "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah", publicly to become a Muslim.

Prayer (Salat) - Prayer must be done five times a day (upon rising, at noon, in mid-afternoon, after sunset, and before going to sleep) towards the direction of Mecca. The call to prayer is sounded by the muezzin (Muslim crier) from a tower (minaret) within the mosque.

Almsgiving (Zakat) - Muslims are legally required to give one-fortieth of their income to the needy. Since those to whom alms are given are helping the giver achieve salvation, there is no sense of shame in receiving charity.

Fasting (Ramadan) - During the holy month of Ramadan, faithful Muslims fast from sunup to sundown each day. This develops self-control, devotion to God, and identity with the needy.

Pilgrimage (Hajj) - Each Muslim is expected to make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime if they have the means to do it and are physically capable of the trip. It is an essential part of gaining salvation, so the old or infirm may send someone in his or her place. It involves a set of rituals and ceremonies.

A sixth religious duty associated with the five pillars is Jihad, or Holy War. This duty requires that if the situation warrants, men are required to go to war to defend or spread Islam. If they are killed, they are guaranteed eternal life in Paradise.

JUDAISM

The Old Testament books of the Bible describe numerous struggles of the Jewish people. After their triumphant Exodus from Egyptian captivity following Moses, they wandered around in the desert for forty years before entering the Promised Land. They had many conflicts with neighboring societies, yet for several centuries were able to maintain a unified state centred in Jerusalem.

Basic Beliefs of Judaism:

Judaism is a monotheistic religion, which believes that the world was created by a single, all-knowing divinity, and that all things within that world were designed to have meaning and purpose as part of a divine order. According to the teachings of Judaism, God's will for human behavior was revealed to Moses and the Israelites at Mount Sinai. The Torah, or commandments, which regulate how humans are to live their lives, was a gift from God so that they might live according to His will.

Statement of Faith:

Moses Maimonides, a Spanish Jew who lived in the 12th century, tried to condense the basic beliefs of Judaism into the form of a creed. It is still followed by the traditional forms of Judaism.

1. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, is the Creator and Guide of everything that has been created; He alone has made, does make, and will make all things.
2. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, is One, and that there is no unity in any manner like unto His, and that He alone is our God, who was, and is, and will be.
3. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, is not a body, and that He is free from all the properties of matter, and that He has not any form whatever.
4. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, is the first and the last.
5. I believe with perfect faith that to the Creator, blessed be His Name, and to Him alone, it is right to pray, and that it is not right to pray to any being besides Him.

6. I believe with perfect faith that all the works of the prophets are true.
7. I believe with perfect faith that the prophecy of Moses, our teacher, peace be unto him, was true, and that he was the chief of the prophets, both of those who preceded and of those who followed him.
8. I believe with perfect faith that the whole Torah, now in our possession, is the same that was given to Moses, our teacher, peace be unto him.
9. I believe with perfect faith that this Torah will not be changed, and that there will never be any other Law from the Creator, blessed be His name.
10. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, knows every deed of the children of men, and all their thoughts, as it is said. It is He that fashioned the hearts of them all, that gives heed to all their works.
11. I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His Name, rewards those that keep His commandments and punishes those that transgress them.
12. I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah; and, though he tarry, I will wait daily for his coming.
13. I believe with perfect faith that there will be a revival of the dead at the time when it shall please the Creator, blessed be His name, and exalted be His Fame forever and ever.
14. For Thy salvation I hope, O Lord.

**Source: The source of this information is the Religious Youth Service. A project of the Inter-Religious and International Federation for World Peace.*

Guru Ka Langar

The institution of "free kitchen" or the "temple of bread", as Prof. Puran Singh called it, was started by Guru Nanak Ji. He desired that every Sikh should share his food with others - Wand Chhakna - and that his kitchen should be open to all. Subsequently the Langar took on an institutional form and became a part of the Sikh temple. This community kitchen is meant to provide food to all devotees and pilgrims. Every Sikh is expected to contribute to it either by donating foodstuff or by participating in the cooking and distribution of the food.

Guru Nanak Ji set up a Langar at Kartarpur where people brought corn and fuel, and worked together to prepare a common meal for the whole community. Guru Angad Ji extended the Langar and personally served in it. Guru Amardas Ji turned it into an institution and ordered that all who came to see him must first eat in Langar: food first, congregation next - pahley pangat, pachhey sangat. Even Emperor Akbar and the Raja of Haripur had to sit on the floor with the common people and take a meal with them. Apart from promoting social equality, the Langar eliminated taboos about chaunka - the preparation of food in a special enclosure, etc. Guru Ramdas Ji who ordered that water and meals also be served to travelers and squatters widened the scope of "Langar". Guru Arjan Ji and his wife personally served water to the Sangat.

Many of the Sikhs started their own Langars at Anandpur. One day, Guru Gobind Singh Ji went out incognito on an inspection of Langars. He found out that Bhai Nand Lal maintained the Langar well, while others were indifferent to the needs of poor Sikhs. He warned them and remarked, "The mouths of the poor are Guru's receptacles of gifts."

According to Prof. Puran Singh, "What is a home but a hospitable feasting of children with bread, love and faith? What is spiritual life in a temple of flesh without a full meal first? The very first temple made by Guru Nanak Ji therefore, was the Temple of Bread or Guru's Langar".

Source: www.sikhpoint.com

Sikh Ardas – Sarbat da Bhalaa

The first part of the Sikh Ardas invokes God and the blessings of the first nine Gurus. The second part recounts the events in the life of the Tenth Guru, the subsequent Sikh history, and the struggles faced and the sacrifices made, for the reform of temples and the maintenance of Sikh tradition. The third part pertains to the individual's own thoughts and any special purpose or the occasion for it.

In the end, the Sikh prays for humble mind and sound intellect, the victory of the Khalsa Panth, "the Word" and betterment of humanity.

A Sikh believes in a personal God to whom he must go every now and then because he regards Him as a friend and benefactor. He recites a prayer before he starts any work or business. Even if he has no time for a full Ardas, he says a short prayer.

Any man or woman can lead Sikh prayer; it is congregational in the nature of its contents. It recounts the sacrifices of Sikhs and without mentioning the enemies

of the Sikhs, prays for greater strength to face even bigger tests. The basic idea is to inspire the Sikhs to similar heroic deeds in any future times of need.

Prayer is a means of ridding the mind of material desires and filling it with noble thoughts & aspirations. The prayer requires an effort at heart-searching, an effort to become nobler.

The mind must be emptied of all worldly ambitions so that peace may enter it. The Sikh Ardas demands a complete surrender to Divine Will. It is not a passive resignation to the Will of God, but a conscious acceptance of His Will, which is accepted as ultimately benefiting the individual as His Will can only bring goodness for humanity. Thus the Lord never fails a Sikh as a Sikh only seeks the strength to accept His Will. This submission eliminates the ego- the wall that stands between man and his Creator.

The reading of Guru Granth Sahib is itself a prayer. We seek the Guru's command. He gives us wise counsel, but it depends on us to obey. Merely worshipping the scripture without carrying its teachings into daily life is seen as total negation of prayer. True prayer is the practical living up to the word of the Guru and a continuing effort for spiritual development.

Sikhs are directed to share their joys and sorrows with Waheguru through the "Ardas" only and keep praying for Waheguru's blessings / forgiveness.

Source: www.sikhpoint.com

The Ardas – Translation

God is One; victory to him! May the Divine Power help us.

We begin by remembering the Almighty Power and then think of Guru Nanak. May the Guru Angad, Amar Das and Ram Das give us assistance. Let us also remember Arjan, Hargobind and holy Har Rai. And think of holy HarKrishen whose sight dispels all sorrows. Let us keep in our thoughts Tegh Bahadur – may he grant us all treasures. May all of them protect us everywhere. May our Tenth Lord, Guru Gobind Singh, also support us everywhere. Turn your thoughts, O Khalsa, to the holy Guru Granth Sahib, that is the spirit of all the ten Gurus, and recite: *Waheguru!*

Let us remind ourselves of the noble deeds of the Five Loved Ones, the Four Princes (Sons of Guru Gobind Singh Ji), the Forty Saved Ones, and many other steadfast devotees who remembered the name of the Lord, shared their earnings with others, carried out charity, wielded the sword, and overlooked others' faults. While we think of them, let us recite: *Waheguru!*

All those who laid down their lives for the faith - had their bodies cut joint by joint, their scalps removed, were torn on the toothed wheel, were sawn alive into two, but until their last breath, did not abandon their Sikh faith and maintained their holy hair. Let us remember them and recite: *Waheguru!*

Think of the Five Holy Thrones (seats of Sikh Religious authority) and all the Gurdwaras and recite: *Waheguru!* The entire Khalsa offer their prayers. May the *Khalsa* meditate on your Name and in turn be blessed with peace and comfort. May the *Khalsa*, wherever they are, enjoy God's protection, and Grace. May

charity, justice and faith flourish. May the Khalsa's honour be ever upheld and May they always be victorious by God's Grace. Let us recite: *Waheguru*.

Kindly bless the Sikhs O Lord with the gift of Sikhism. May their unshorn hair shine forever, Grant them the gift of unshorn hair, Sikh values, divine knowledge, faith and belief. Grant them the supreme gift of the Holy Name and having a bath in the Sacred Tank of Amritsar. May their choirs, banners and mansions stand forever. May righteousness always triumph. Let us recite: *Waheguru!*

May the Sikhs be humble in conduct and high in their wisdom. May the Lord guide their wisdom.

O Lord, the protector of Your Pant, pray grant the Khalsa unrestricted access to, and care of, such shrines as Nankeen Sahib, from which the Sikhs have been separated. O Lord! You are the honor of the humble, the protector of the helpless, the shelter of the homeless; we pray to dedicate to You our recitation of (here name the holy text recited). Forgive us for our errors and shortcomings during our recitation of the above Gurbani.

We pray that tasks of one and all be accomplished. Make us, O Lord; meet such loveable souls, by meeting whom we will remember You. May Your Name, says Nanak, ever inspire a triumphant spirit. May one and all prosper by Your Grace.

The *Khalsa* belongs to *Waheguru* in whom all victory exists.

Source: Dr Neki

Understanding the SRM – The Ardas

Gurmukh pyare jio
Waheguru ji ka Khalsa Waheguru ji ki Fateh!

I am taking the words of the SRM (Sikh Rehat Maryada) from the English version published by SGPC (Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Commitee). The additional notes and elaborations are my humble understanding.

The idea is to try and know what the SRM is, and to try and understand its contents. This is a document that lays down the Sikh code of conduct and conventions. It is prepared in the *jugt* of guru Khalsa Panth and has been published by SGPC.

Whether individually one abides by the SRM or not is one's choice. Guru ji told us of the futility of worshipping idols but some of us have made idols/statues of guru ji to worship. Also if we believe that doing the prescribed nitname is a ritual that prevents us from praising the lord in any way we like, then maybe we do not need Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, for the shabads in it are also prescribed and definite. Reading from the guru sahib is also restricting us from praising the lord in the way we like. Some may also regard it as a ritual. Our purpose here is not to question its contents, but to try and understand them.

Now let us get back to the SRM...

CLAUSE 3

This clause of the SRM looks at the Ardas. The full Ardas has been written out word for word in the SRM. Space is provided where the congregation can add in its own specific bayntee (request). Thus the intention of the SRM is that we all do the standard Ardas.

Clause 3(a): The text of the Ardas

This is a model of the Ardas. It may be adapted to different occasions and for different purposes. However, the initial composition with "Pritham Bhagauti..." and the concluding phrases commencing "Nanak Nam" must not be altered.

Ardas: LIT. Supplication or prayer. In reality, it is litany comprising very briefly the whole gamut of Sikh History and enumerating all that Sikhism holds sacred. Portions of it are invocations and prayer for the granting of strength and virtue. It concludes with: "O Nanak, may the Nam (Holy) be ever in ascendance: in Thy will, may the good of all prevail!"

One absolute Manifest; victory belongeth to Waheguru [the Wondrous Destroyer of darkness]. May the might of the All-powerful help! Ode to His Might - by the tenth lord.

Having first thought of the Almighty's prowess, let us think of Guru Nanak. Then Angad Guru and Amardas, Ramdas - may they be our rescuers! Remember, then, Arjan, Harigobind and Harirai. Meditate then on revered Hari Krishan on seeing whom all suffering vanishes. Think then of Teg Bahadar, remembrance of whom brings all nine treasures. He comes to rescue everywhere. Then of the tenth Lord, revered Guru Gobind Singh, who comes to rescue everywhere. The embodiment of the light of all ten sovereign lordships, the Guru Granth - think of the view and reading of it and say, "Waheguru".

Meditating on the achievement of the dear and truthful ones, including the five beloved ones, the four sons of the tenth Guru, forty liberated ones, steadfast ones, constant repeaters of the Divine Name, those given to assiduous devotion, those who repeated the Nam, shared their fare with others, ran free kitchen, wielded the sword and overlooked faults and shortcomings, O Khalsa, say "Waheguru".

Meditating on the achievement of the male and female members of the Khalsa who laid down their lives in the cause of Dharma (religion and righteousness), got their bodies dismembered bit by bit, got their skulls sawn off, got mounted on spiked wheels, got their bodies sawn, made sacrifices in the service of the shrines (Gurdwaras), did not betray their faith, sustained their adherence to the Sikh faith with unshorn hair till their last breath, O Khalsa, say "Waheguru".

Thinking of the five thrones (seats of religious authority) and all Gurdwaras, O Khalsa, say "Waheguru". Now it is the prayer of the whole Khalsa. May the conscience of the whole Khalsa be informed by Waheguru, Waheguru, and Waheguru and, in consequence of such remembrance, may total well being be granted. Wherever there are communities of the Khalsa, may there be Divine protection and grace, the ascendance of the supply of needs and of the holy sword, protection of the tradition of grace, victory of the Panth, the succour of the holy sword, ascendance of the Khalsa. O Khalsa, say "Waheguru."

Unto the Sikhs the gift of the Sikh faith, the gift of the untrimmed hair, the gift of the discipline of their faith, the gift of sense of discrimination, the gift of trust, the gift of confidence, above all, the gift of meditation on the Divine. Bathing in Amritsar (holy tank at Amritsar). May hymn-singing missionary parties, the flags, the hostels, abide from age to age. May righteousness reign supreme. Say, "Waheguru."

May the Khalsa be imbued with humility and high wisdom! May Waheguru guard it's understanding! O Immortal Being, eternal helper of Thy Panth, benevolent Lord, bestow on the Khalsa the beneficence of unobstructed visit to and free management of Nankana Sahib and other shrines and places of the Guru from which the Panth has been separated.

O Thou, the honour of the humble, the strength of the weak, aid unto those who have none to rely on, True Father, Waheguru, we humbly render to you (Mention here the name of the scriptural composition that has been recited or, in appropriate terms, the object for which the congregation has been held.) Pardon any impermissible accretions, omissions, errors and mistakes. Fulfill the purposes of all. Grant us the association of those dear ones, on meeting whom one is reminded of Your name. O Nanak! May the Nam (Holy) be ever in ascendance! In Thy will may the good of all prevail!"

This is the standard Ardas, which should be followed in congregations. Individually, too, a Sikh may use this Ardas. Of course Sikhs may use their own words as their personal Ardas, or NO WORDS at all since "vinn boliaa'n sabh kuchh jaandhaa", i.e., He knows everything without our saying so.

Clause 3 (b): After the Ardas

On the conclusion of the Ardas, the entire congregation participating in the Ardas should respectfully genuflect [methaa tek] before the revered Guru Granth, then stand up and call out, "Waheguru ji ka Khalsa Waheguru ji ki Fateh". The Congregation should, thereafter, raise the loud spirited chant of "Bolay so nihaal, Sat Sri Akaal".

Note that the three dohras:

1. "Agya bhayee akaal ki, tabhi chalaayo Panth sabh sikhian ko hukm hai, guru maniyo granth",
2. "Guru granth ji maaniyo, pargat guraan ki dheh jo prabh ko milbo chehai, khoj shabad me leh" and
3. "Raaj karega Khalsa, aaki rahe na koey khuaar hoey sabh milengay, bachay sharan jo hoey"

are sung by the congregation just before the 'bolay so nihaal' jaikara.

Clause 3 (c): During the Ardas

While the Ardas is being performed, all men and women in congregation should stand (in respectful attention) with hands folded (at chest level). The person in attendance of the Guru Granth should keep waving the whisk (Chaur sahib) while standing.

Note: Whenever the ardasia calls out "bolo ji", every member in the congregation must say 'Waheguru' once only. The ardasia says the

Ardas, the rest of the congregation listens (except for saying 'Waheguru' when requested).

Clause 3 (d):

The person who performs the Ardas should stand facing the Guru Granth with hands folded. If the Guru Granth Sahib is not there, performing the Ardas facing any direction is acceptable.

Clause 3 (e):

When any special Ardas for, and on behalf of, one or more persons is offered, it is not necessary for persons in the congregation other than that person or those persons to stand up. (e.g., only the bride, groom and parents stand during the ardas done before an anand kaaraj ceremony).

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON THE ARDAS

If we spend some time reflecting on what the Ardas is saying, we will understand how wonderful and spiritual the standard Ardas is. I am making an attempt below, but the guru's ways only the guru knows. So please forgive my errors.

1. Before the Ardas we sing a Shabad from Gurbani to get ourselves tuned to what we are going to do. Get our minds in focus. "Tuun thakur tum...". (Note: we sing only from 'tuun thakur to Nanak das sadha kurbani'. Please do not add anything before or after this. The Ardasia can say a few verses on his own, but these should not be sung. This will help in standardising the congregational worship).
2. The Ardas proper (the supplication or the bayntee) starts from the words "Prithme sarbat Khalsa ji ki Ardas hai....".
3. Before the Khalsa can do the Ardas, the sangat is reminded of who the Khalsa is. The Khalsa comes from God, so we remember God "pritham bhagauti simar ke..". Revealed to the world by the ten Patshahian, so we remember them. "Gur Nanak lai dhiai. Fir Angad gurdaswe patshah sahib Sri guru Gobind Singh ji sabh thaii hoi sahai". Then the present Jyot in Guru Granth Sahib ji.
4. Then we acknowledge the Jugt in Guru Khalsa Panth by remembering the panj pyare, then the chaar Sahibzade... exalted souls... Shaheeds who sacrificed their lives for the Panth.
5. Then we recognise the institutions of the Panth, the Takhts and the Gurduaras.

6. Up to this stage, we have brought the sangat to realise and feel one with the Khalsa Panth and its organisation. Now the Ardas starts.
7. First the Khalsa asks for 'Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru, chit aawe' for the whole Khalsa. Then due to this, sukh howe. Protection of the Khalsa. Victory for deg and tegh. Victory for the Panth....etc...
8. Then for the individual Sikhs we ask for Sikhi dhaan, kesh dhaan,etc...
9. And "sikhan dha mun neewa, mut uchee mut dha rakha. ". Service of Nankana sahib and other Gurduaras not in Panthic control..
10. Now the Ardas focuses on us. Nimaanian...nitaanian...etc... As we consider ourselves in this category in the presence of the Guru, this is where the Panth has decided that we bring in our specific requests. Here we can say our piece, with love and devotion. With humility.
11. Then ask for forgiveness...akhar waadha ghatta....
12. Now we go universal. Sarbat dhe kaaraj raas karne...
13. We started with request for "Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru chit aawe" and now we repeat that by saying .. "seii pyare mel jinna milian tera naam chit aawe... Nanak naam chardhi kalaa...tere bhaane sarbat dha bhala."
14. We 'matha tek' before Guru ji stand up again and sing the Dohra "aagya bhayee Akaal ki... Guru Granth ji maniyo...Raaj Karega Khalsa...bache sharan jo hoi". Reminding us again of Akaal (God), Guru Granth Sahib and Guru Khalsa Panth. Guru Gobind Singh Ji had said, "Puja Akaal ki, parcha Shabad ka, dheedhaar Khalse dha". The Dohra reminds us of this.
15. We then say aloud the Sikh Slogan of Chardhi Kalaa, "Boleh so nihaal, Sat Sri Akaal", matha tek and sit down to listen to Guru ji's hukm. Thus the Ardas is not just MERA MERA MERA. It is not just my dialogue with my guru telling him my needs and my problems, etc. It reminds me that I am a part of the Panth (which we are forgetting), that the Ardas is collective in that I ask for the Panth, and all other Sikhs, all those boons before I come to myself. And then in order to bring me back to perspective and not leave me in my own importance or thoughts, the Ardas brings me back to naam and the universal good. My small self is again subsumed by the greater good. The emphasis is not on mera mera mera, but on TERA TERA TERA.

Can there be a more beautiful prayer? Dhan Guru te dhan Guru dha Khalsa.

Let us reflect on this. The Panth has been given the title of 'satgur poora' by Guru Ji himself. The Panth has the right to make decisions affecting all Sikhs.

IF we accept the decision of the GURU KHALSA PANTH issued from the Takht Sri Akaal Takht sahib as the HUKM of the guru, then the Ardas written in the Sikh Reht Maryada is the hukm of the Guru. There is a place in the standard Ardas left blank for the sangat and the Sikh to share their feelings, thoughts, requests, demands, etc. with the Guru. The rest of the Ardas should be recited in the congregation as written.

A Sikh can do any kind of Ardas or say any words or do it in any language when not doing it in the formal sangat. But in the sangat should try to follow the hukm. Fill in the blank in any language, etc. according to the specific needs and situation of the sangat, if so desired.

A Sikh should not add or subtract any words of the written Ardas. Adding '84 dhe shaheedan' or vartmaan shaheedan, or jaito dhe morche vich shaheed hoay etc' introduces a time and space dimension into the Ardas. The Ardas at present is beyond these limits.

This is as per my limited understanding. May Guru Ji guide us!

BRIEF ARDAS

Sometimes we need to do just a brief Ardas. Here we start with:

"Ardas, Ik Oangkaar Waheguru ji ki fateh, sri bhagauti..Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji dhe paath dheedhaar dha dhian dharke bolo ji Waheguru".

This beginning part of the Ardas is compulsory. After this we can say our short benti and conclude with:

"Nanak Naam chardhi kalaa tere bhaane sarbat dha bhalaa". Followed by "Bole so nihaal."

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa Waheguru ji ki Fateh!
Guru raakhaa.

Autar Singh
GLZ - 1999

Source: Posts from the Gurmat Learning Zone. Written by Autar Singh, a past president of Sikh Naujawan Sabha Malaysia, who owns and moderates the

'Gurmat Learning Zone', the biggest Internet Sikhi discussion group. Readers wishing to join the group may email Autar Singh at amber8@tm.net.my

Our National Anthem

"Advance Australia Fair"

Australians all let us rejoice
For we are young and free
We've golden soil and wealth for toil,
Our home is girt by sea:
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare,
In history's page let every stage
Advance Australia fair,
In joyful strains then let us sing
Advance Australia fair
Beneath our radiant Southern Cross,
We'll toil with hearts and hands,
To make this Commonwealth of ours
Renowned of all the lands,
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share,
With courage let us all combine
To advance Australia fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia fair.

Theme Shabad

"Aagya Bhayee Akal Kee"

"AwigAw BeI Akwl kI"

AwigAw BeI Akwl kI, qbY clwieE pMQ]
siB isKn ko hukm hY, gurU mwinE gRMQ]
gurU gRMQ jI mwinE, pRgt gurW kI dyh]
jo pRB ko imlbo chY, Koj Sbd mY lyh]
rwj krygw KwlsW, AwkI rhy nw koie]
KuAwr hoie siB imlYNgY, bcy Srn jo hoie]
boly so inwhl] siq sRI AkwL]

Aagya bhayee akal kee, Tabhi chalaayo Panth
Sabh Sikhan ko hukam hai, Guru maanyo Granth
Guru Granth jee maanyo, Pargat guraan kee deh
Jo prabh ko milbo chahe, Khoj shabad main ley
Raaj karegaa Khalsa, Aakee rahe na koya
Khuar hoye sabh milenge, Bache sharan jo hoye
BOLE SO NIHAL, SAT SRI AKAL!

The order has come from the Eternal Lord, to follow the Panth,
The order to all Sikhs is to obey the Granth Sahib as Guru,
With faith in the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, the Guru's blessings become manifest.
One, who wishes to meet God, is to look to the Shabad, the Word.
The Khalsa shall rule and no opposition shall be able to stand against it.
All those who meet together in humility will be under the Protection of God.
They who reply will be blessed; the truth is Great and Undying!

More Shabads

"Avoh Sikh Satigur(u) Ke Piariho"

1. Avoh sikh Satgur(u) ke piariho, Gavoh sachi bani
2. Bani ta gavoh Guru kerī, bania sir (i) bani
3. Jin kau nadar (i) karam (u) hovai, hirdai tina samani
4. Pivoh amrit (u) sada rahoh Har (i) rang (i), japiho saring pani
5. Kahai Nanak (u) sada gavoh, eh sachi bani

1. *Come, you true and beloved devotees of the True Guru and sing the True Hymns*
2. *Sing the True Hymns of the True Guru, which are the Hymns of all Hymns*
3. *The True Hymns will enter the hearts of those persons, upon whom God looks with kindness*
4. *Abide in the True Love of God, meditate on His Name (Naam) and then you will forever drink Nectar*
5. *(Satguru) Nanak says, sing the True Hymns forever*

Khalsa Anthem – "Dayh Shivaa"

1. Dayh Shivaa bar mo-eh ihai, Shubh karman tay kabhahoo(n) na taro(n)
2. Na daro (n) ar so jab jaa-e laron(n), Nishchai kar aapnee jeet karon(n)
3. Ar Sikh haao aapanay hee man kao, Ih laalach hau gun tau ucharo(n)
4. Jab aav kee audh nidhan banai, At hee ran mai tab joojh maro(n)

1. *Grant me, O God, this blessing; May I never refrain from righteous acts.*
2. *May I fight without fear against all foes in the battle of life, and, with the courage of Faith, achieve the Victory.*
3. *May my mind be ingrained with Your Teachings; May my highest ambitions be to sing your praises.*
4. *And, when this mortal life comes to its end, May I die in battle, with limitless courage!*

Game of Love – “Jau Tau Praym”

Jau tau praym khaylan kaa chaa-o
Sir dhar talee galee mayree aa-o
It maarag pair dhareejai
Sir deejai kaan na keejai

If you desire to play the game of love, come this way with your head on your palm, once you have stepped on this path, be prepared to offer your head as sacrifice and fear not public opinion

Pehilaa maran kabool,
jeevan kee chhad aas
Ho-o sabhanaa kee raynukaa,
Tau aa-o hamaari paas

Accept death first, become the dust under the feet of others (practice total humility), then come on my path

Gagan damaamaa baaji-o,
pari-o neeshaanai ghaa-o
Khayt jo maandi-o soormaa,
ab joojan ko daa-o
Sooraa so pehichanee-ai,
Jo larai deen kay hayt
Purjaa purjaa kat marai,
Kabahoo na chhaadai khayt

The battle-drum beats, aim is taken. The warrior enters the battlefield – it is time for combat. He alone is a true warrior, who fights for his ‘dheen’ (universal principles such as Truth, Justice, Love, Equality, Harmony, Charity and so on). Though cut to pieces he deserts not the battlefield.

Prayer Before Meals

1. Dadaa Daataa ek hai sabhko devanhaar
2. Dhendhe tot na aava-ee agant bhare bhandar
3. Jis daa ditaa khavana tis kaheei saabas
4. Nanak hukam na chalaee naal khasam chalai ardaas

- 1. One Waheguru gives to all His creations*
- 2. When Waheguru gives, He gives without restrictions and has abundance of everything (for everyone)*
- 3. Let us thank Waheguru ji whose gifts of food we eat.*
- 4. Nanak says, with Waheguru, only humble supplications are fulfilled and not commands*

Nishan Sahib Selami

Degh Tegh Fateh
Panth Ki Jeet

Jhoolde Nishan Rahein
Panth Maharaaj Ke.

Jugh jugh jite hovaye
Khande de nishan di

Boleh So Nehaal
Sat Sri Akaal!

My Resolutions - 'Meri Pertigya'

1. I will, in the morning, after a bath and before breakfast:
 - Do 'Waheguru' Naam Simran for 5 minutes
 - Recite 'Mool Mantar' 10 times
 - Do the first 5 Pauris of Japji Sahib, followed by Salok 'Pavan Guru....'
 - Do Japji Sahib

2. I will before every meal:
 - Recite "Dadaa Daataa ek hai....."

3. I will, at dusk, before the evening meal
 - Do 'Mool Mantar' 10 times
 - Do the 'Rehras' Paath

4. I will, at night, before going to bed
 - Do 'Mool Mantar' 10 times
 - Recite 'Kirtan Sohila'

5. I will go to the local Gurdwara regularly and do seva

6. I will _____

Name (participant)

Witness (Counsellor)

Date: _____

