

Homa Ritual for Chinese New Year

[Three prostrations, plus one to the ritual master]

Mahā Prajñāparamita Heart Sūtra

(Precentor intones “When the”; chant the Heart Sūtra 3x)

▼○
When the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara[⊙]
was coursing in the deep *prajñāparamita*,
he perceived that all five *skandhas* are empty,
thereby transcending all sufferings.

Śariputra, form is not other than emptiness[⊙]
and emptiness not other than form.
Form is precisely emptiness
and emptiness precisely form.

So also are sensation, perception, volition, and consciousness.
Śariputra, this voidness of all dharmas
is not born, not destroyed,
not impure, not pure,
does not increase or decrease.

⊙
In voidness there is no form,
and no sensation, perception, volition or consciousness;
no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind;
no sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, thought.
There is no realm of the eye,
all the way up to no realm of mental cognition.

There is no ignorance
and there is no ending of ignorance;
through to no aging and death,
and no ending of aging and death.
There is no suffering,
no cause of suffering,
no cessation of suffering,
and no path.
There is no wisdom or any attainment.
With nothing to attain,
bodhisattvas relying on *prajñāparamita*,
have no obstructions in their minds.

Having no obstructions,

there is no fear
and departing far from confusion and imagining,
they reach ultimate *nirvāṇa*.



All past, present and future buddhas,
relying on *prajñāparamita*
attain *anuttarā-samyak-saṃbodhi*.
Therefore, know that *prajñāparamita*
is the great mantra of power,
the great mantra of wisdom,
the supreme mantra,
the unequalled mantra,
which is able to remove all sufferings.
It is real and not false.

Therefore, recite the mantra of *prajñāparamita*:
Gate, Gate. Paṛagate. Paṛasamgate. Bodhi Svahā.



1. Invoking the Earth God

[The ritual master *visualizes the Earth God suddenly emerging from the earth and accepting the blessing of the master. After the master makes his offerings, the Earth God disappears. The master then visualizes the wielding of the Vajra toward the direction of the fire altar to create there a Vajra foundation.*]

2. Inviting the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas

Recite in unison:

▼ We implore you, Honored Ones,
On account of your vows
To descend to this ritual space.
Please have compassion on us
And accept these meager offerings.

3. Arousing the Bodhi Mind

Recite in unison:

▼ The root of sentient beings' transmigration in *saṃsāra* is grasping to self.
Complete emancipation depends on comprehending *sūnyatā*.
The *dharmadhātus* are originally created by the mind.
All are auspicious and wondrous paths to awakening.

We vow to deliver innumerable sentient beings;
We vow to cut off limitless vexations;
We vow to master limitless approaches to Dharma;
We vow to attain Buddhahood.

4. Homage to the Three Jewels

Recite in unison:

- ▼ We take refuge in the Buddha, the great compassionate one, savior of sentient beings, skillful guide, and omniscient. You are the ocean of merit and virtue. [prostrate]
- ▼ We take refuge in the Dharma, which purifies the poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance, and brings liberation. The perfection of suchness. [prostrate]
- ▼ We take refuge in the Saṅgha, who transmit the teachings, realize liberation, abide in the perfection of precepts, and are the supreme field of merit and virtue. [prostrate]

5. Repentance and Vows

Recite in unison:

- ▼ We take refuge in the buddhas, the arhats, the holy saṅgha, and bodhisattvas in world-systems throughout the ten directions. From the past through to this life, mental afflictions have obscured our minds. We have long been drifting through [the realms of] life and death. Driven by greed, anger, and delusion, we have committed harmful acts, either toward the Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha, or toward the arhats and bodhisattvas, or toward parents and venerable ones and sentient beings with and without virtue. All harmful acts, either doing them ourselves, abetting others, or rejoicing in seeing them done, through actions of body, speech, and mind—we have extensively accumulated negative karma. With palms joined and a sincere heart, we make obeisance with head bowed before the buddhas and bodhisattvas and repent in this manner. Just as the transgressions that we have committed through harmful actions are known to the buddhas, we repent of them all.

In order to remove the sufferings of sentient beings, with utmost sincerity, we generate bodhi-mind,

take refuge in the Three Jewels, and vow to realize buddhahood. [prostrate]

[Reflect: Arousing thoughts of reverence and taking refuge in this manner, make obeisance with head on the ground. Then giving rise to sincerity; rejoice and generate the mind of awakening; seek the fruit of buddhahood.]

Recite in unison:

▼ We shall eliminate the countless sufferings of sentient beings throughout [all] world-systems and also rescue them from all evil destinies and liberate them from mental afflictions. They are oppressed by different modes of sufferings, and so we arouse great compassion and wisdom of skillful means. For sentient beings who are in anguish, we shall become a refuge; for sentient beings without a leader, we shall become their leader; for sentient beings who have lost their way, we shall become their guide; for sentient beings who are afraid, we shall bestow fearlessness; for sentient beings who are in anguish, we shall make happy; and for sentient beings who are plagued by mental afflictions, we shall cure their mental afflictions.

The merit produced by the sundry good acts that we are now performing and by our generating the mind of awakening, we transfer to all sentient beings so that they may realize liberation. The merit produced through the six *pāramitās* and other merits that we have produced, we transfer to all sentient beings so that all may together achieve supreme buddhahood.

The excellent acts of merit performed by us in the past, present, and future we transfer entirely to all sentient beings so that they may quickly accomplish the path of the buddhas and not engender indolence until they reach awakening. We generate the bodhi-mind, think with pity of sentient beings, and give rise to thoughts of great compassion—should someone have sufferings, may we eliminate them some day!

6. Fire Offering

[Outdoor: Proceed to outside.]

Recite in unison:

▼ To Agni, the fire divinity:
Illuminate the dark to become bright.

Drive away all obscurity with this fire!
Your kind smile sends away sorrows.
Please sit on this good abode and admire!

◎
To buddhas and bodhisattvas:
Empowered by virtue,
Your wisdom eradicates all obstacles!
We, now, implore you to help this *homa*
and fulfil our vows!

[While making various offerings of flower, incense, food in this sequence, generate sincerity and recite mentally the refuge verses. Recite the vows of practitioners.]

After the offering is over, the ritual master empowers some purified water cupped in his hand and sprinkles it over the hearth by circling his hand: do this three times. When the homa is completely finished, again invoke Agni so that he may receive the remaining offerings, return and dismiss him as prescribed, and supplicate him as in the rites of invocation.]

7. Gratitude

Recite in unison:

▼ Luminous, warm, and heat felt. ◎
As these smokes ascend and spread, so are the grand Dharma activities.
With the sword of wisdom, cut off grasping to notions of self.
May blessings from the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and Agni extend throughout the
dharmadhātu. ◎

[Return indoor to the Chan Hall]

8. Transfer of Merit

Recite in unison:

▼ We transfer the pure karma produced to all sentient beings ◎
so that they may accomplish [various] virtues.
We also ask that through the merit produced,
may all sentient beings obtain inexhaustible wealth, and that
they may be generous, increase their wisdom, achieve
great forbearance, always cultivate wholesome deeds,
and always espouse great compassion.
Wherever sentient beings are born,
may they be endowed with the above qualities and travel
the bodhisattva path! ◎

[Three prostrations, plus one to the master]