

## DAILY SHRINE OFFERINGS

### 1. Water Offerings

Three Sets of Seven bowls are made daily in front of Je Tsongkhapa, Buddha Shakyamuni, and Dorje Shugden.

In general, we make offerings to Buddha not because Buddha needs something from us but because of the opening and enriching effect offering has on our heart. Most Buddhists offer at least seven bowls of water every day. Whilst physically pouring the water with great care and respect, mentally we imagine we offer much more than water. When we fill the first bowl we imagine we are offering nectar for drinking to all the Buddhas. With the second we offer water to wash their feet; with the third, flowers; with the fourth, incense; with the fifth countless forms of light such as candles, jewels, stars, the sun and moon; with the sixth we anoint their body with perfume; and with the seventh we offer a great banquet of food and drink. During our prayers and offering ceremonies we make an eighth offering – music – but this is not normally represented as a water offering.

To make the offerings:

Begin by making three prostrations as we go for refuge and generate bodhichitta.

- Take a blue bucket from the kitchen, along with a white shrine cloth/towel
- Empty the water currently filling the bowls on the shrine and wipe the bowls of excess water
- Take the blue buckets to the kitchen and empty into the drain
- Fill the green plastic water cans in the kitchen with water
- Before filling the bowls make sure they are lined up straight. They should be close, about a grain of rice space between.
- Pour the water into the bowls from left to right. The water levels should be even and filled about a finger width from the top of each bowl.
- Use the shrine cloth to wipe away any spills



## 2. Offerings to Dorje Shugden

Traditionally five food offerings are made to the Dharma Protector, Dorje Shugden, each day: alcohol, tea, cakes, milk and curd. We also offer the Serkyum, which means "golden nectar". This is usually in the form of tea and is the taller offering to the far left.

To prepare the offerings, gather the following items:

Glassware - typically kept on the drying sheet in the kitchen

Whisky (kept in the cupboard to the right, above the sink)

Lapsang Souchong teabag (kept in the cupboard to the right, above the sink)

Teapot (kept in the far left cupboard under the shrine)

Cake/Cookies (kept in the cupboard to the right, above the sink)

Milk (found in mini fridge)

Curd/kefir (found in mini fridge)

Fill each glass with each substance about a finger width from the top of the glass

To ensure the tea isn't so hot that it breaks the glassware, fill the two tea offerings (in the picture - the glass containing the "golden drink" and the glass containing tea) about 1/3 of the way with cool water

Place the items in front of Dorje Shugden in the following order:

Serkyam containing the golden drink - far left

Five food offerings (always in this order): alcohol, tea, cakes, milk and curd

