

Sri Krishna Homam

Laghu Paddhati (Short Procedure)

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A Word from the author

My spiritual master Dr Manish Pandit hails from Pune, India and lives in Manchester, UK. The idea of spreading homam in the world was revealed to him in a dream a few years ago. He saw eight elevated beings in a dream. They transported him across blue skies to Chennai, India, where he was shown the big fire that was to be lighted in future. They told him to start the work. They assured him that homam as a spiritual sadhana was very appropriate in Kali yuga. As spiritually inclined people have fewer and fewer hours to spend on spiritual sadhana everyday with the progressing Kali yuga, sadhanas that work fast are more relevant. Homam works much faster than japam and other spiritual sadhanas. They told him that the practice of homam would transform into a movement that would reach across caste, class and race barriers.

Later, when we were performing a Shata Chandi Homam in the first week of March 2006 at the Kalikambal temple in Chennai, he had a darshan of Divine Mother on a Friday and was reassured by Her about the right course of events regarding spreading homam. A Mahaganapathi homam manual was published later and several people are performing it daily or weekly or monthly.

When we were in Mayapur, India in May 2008, we were mesmerized by the spiritual vibrations at Mayapur due to the continuous chanting of mahamantra by so many people there. We received an inspiration to create a manual for a Sri Krishna homam based on the mahamantra.

What is Homam

Homam is a fire ritual of sacrifice. It is also known as homa or havan or yajna (yagya) or yajana. In homam, divine presence is invoked into fire using specific procedures. Then materials are sacrificed into fire, along with sacred chants (mantras). The sacrifices are supposed to reach gods. It is interesting to note that fire ritual is an ancient practice and several religions taught worshipping gods in fire.

Bhagavad Gita on Fire Sacrifice

In Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna mentions yajna in several places.

sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭāḥ purovāca prajāpatiḥ |
anena prasaviṣyadhvam eṣa vo'stviṣṭakāmadhuk || 3-10

Translation: Having created beings along with yajna (sacrifice), Prajapati said before, “Be happy by this [yajna], may this fulfill your desires.”

iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā dāsyante yajñabhāvitāḥ |
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo yo bhūṅkte stena eva saḥ || 3-12

Translation: Nourished by the offerings in the yajna, gods give the desired results to beings. One who experiences results given by gods without satisfying them with yajna is but a thief.

annād bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyaḍ annasambhavaḥ |
yajñād bhavati parjanyo yajñāḥ karmasambhavaḥ || 3-14

Translation: All beings are brought into being by food, food is brought into being by rain, rain is brought into being by yajna and yajna is born of action.

yajñe tapasi dāne ca sthitiḥ sad iti cocyate |
karma caiva tadarthīyaṁ sadityevābhidhīyate || 17-27

Translation: Being absorbed in yajna, austerity and charity is good. Action related to these is not tainted, but remains pure.

yajñādānatapaḥkarma na tyājyaṁ kāryameva tat |
yajño dānaṁ tapaścaiva pāvanāni maṇiṣiṇām || 18-5

Translation: Acts of yajna, charity and austerity are never to be given up. Yajna, charity and austerity are purifying even to great men.

Discussion of Bhagavad Gita Teachings

The sacrifices made by human beings in fire nourish gods and give them energy to deliver their responsibilities and distribute various good things to various living beings. Yajna is a responsibility of a learned person, which one should never give up. Actions like yajna purify those performing them and contribute to the smooth running of the world and well being of all living beings.

Vishnu sahasra naama stotra taught by Bhishma in Maha Bharata gives “yajna” as one of the thousand names of Lord Vishnu. Lord Vishnu Himself manifests as yajna and one can reach Lord Vishnu through yajna. When we say that the offerings in yajna reach various gods and help them run the universe smoothly, we are essentially saying that the energy of Lord Vishnu is distributed to various gods through yajna enabling them to discharge their duties. It is in fact the essence of Lord Vishnu that actually runs the universe.

In Kali yuga, “sankirtana yajna” has been suggested by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Srila Prabhupada as an alternative to the external fire ritual. If god’s name is chanted with devotion while material objects are offered to external fire, it is one kind of yajna. If one forgets the hustle

bustle of daily material life of the fast age for a while and chants god's name with devotion, it is another kind of sacrifice to the internal fire. The latter is good too.

What burns karmas and purifies one is the fire, whether external or internal. Because the internal fire is very weak or not even burning in most people, use of an external fire atleast in the beginning can kick start one's spiritual sadhana. One who is not able to feed various gods with yajna in the weak internal fire can atleast use a powerful external fire to discharge the duty and slowly increase one's internal fire as a blessing from that discharge of duty. As that happens, one will be able to focus and become immersed in one's meditation and chanting better.

When an elevated soul chants prayers, it is not any less than a big external fire. The internal fire burns brightly in such people and simple chanting is equivalent to a yajna. Before one reaches such a stage, yajna with an external fire is useful. However, it is interesting to note that several elevated souls perform yajnas with external fire even though they don't need to. Rishis of ancient times performed fire rituals regularly. It may be noted that Srila Prabhupada, founder of ISKCON (International Sri Krishna CONsciousness), also performed yajna several times.

Common Mis-conceptions

(1) *Misconception:* Homam is very difficult to perform. It is for experts only.

Comment: Not really. Several people who did not know anything about how to do any kind of worship conducted homam by themselves by reading the documents prepared by this author. It is a very simple practice. People made it complicated over the years. But it is essentially simple.

(2) *Misconception:* One must either do a "perfect" homam or not do any homam at all. A perfect homam takes a very long time.

Comment: Though one may eat a sumptuous meal on an important festival day, one does not necessarily get a lot of energy from it. One gets most of one's energy from the regular dal (lentils) and rice that one eats everyday.

Though there are complicated versions of homam, it is better to do a simple homam on a regular basis than to do a complicated version very rarely. A small half-hour or one-hour homam done on a daily basis is far better for spiritual sadhana than a big annual or half-yearly homam.

(3) *Misconception:* If mistakes happen in a homam, the consequences will be bad.

Comment: If a homam is performed with a saattwik spirit for saattwik purposes, there are no risks.

If you act nice with your parents because you want their money, you have to understand their thinking well, take the advice of people who know them well and act very carefully to get money from them. Mistakes can be costly and spoil your goal.

But, if you act nice with your parents simply because you love them and want to show your love, you do not need to be careful. You just show your love in whatever way you know. There is no need to follow anybody's advice strictly and there are no risks.

Similarly, you have to be careful if you perform a homam for certain material goals (such as getting money, attracting someone, destroying someone *etc*). If you perform a homam just to show your love to god, cleanse yourself spiritually and make yourself worthy of divine communion, then there are no risks. The procedure taught in this document is based on the teachings of rishis and it is safe for anybody to use. Small mistakes will not result in any punishment.

In fact, it is expected that everybody who uses this document is interested in only the second kind of goal, *i.e.* spiritual cleansing and upliftment.

(4) *Misconception*: One not initiated by a guru (master) cannot perform homam or recite certain mantras.

Comment: If one receives a mantra or a procedure from the mouth of a master, it is analogous to a millionaire opening a bank account in his son's name with a high starting balance. The son is lucky, as he is starting off with a big balance. Similarly, some of the siddhi (attainment) the master has in the mantra or procedure is transferred to the disciple even as (s)he starts out.

If one does *not* receive a mantra or a procedure from the mouth of a master, it is analogous to starting off with a zero bank balance. While it is useful to start off with a positive balance, it is neither necessary nor sufficient. There are sons of millionaires who used up the millions earned by parents and reduced them to zero, while there are some self-made men who made millions purely with self-effort. Similarly, one taught by the greatest guru can fall while one not taught by a guru can reach the ultimate. While it is desirable to have a guru, it is by no means compulsory.

If one is the kind who needs to have a guru figure behind every mantra or procedure, one can think of the author and/or his spiritual master, Dr Manish Pandit from Pune, India (currently residing in Birmingham, UK) as the guru for this homam procedure.

(5) *Misconception*: Those who are not learned in Veda cannot recite Veda mantras and perform homam based on Veda mantras.

Comment: Jnaneshwar was a 12th century master. He was a great Krishna devotee. When he was asked to not recite Veda by a council of erudite scholars, as he was not formally qualified, he replied that every being had a right to recite Veda. When he started reciting, they tried to shut his mouth. Then, a buffalo standing next to him recited Veda! The scholars begged his pardon and corrected their narrow-minded attitude.

Many great souls like him taught that Veda could be recited by anyone. One engaged in *tantric* practices that serve specific purposes and give specific *siddhis* (attainments) need to be afraid of side effects and punishments for mistakes, but mantras from Veda were taught by great rishis for

the highest purpose of self-realization. One reciting them need not be afraid of any side effects. Veda mantras are saattwik, self-correcting and ultimately leading to self-realization.

Those who have an affinity to tantric practices should not be discouraged from learning and using them, but those who appreciate the teachings of rishis must be encouraged to recite Veda mantras and perform homam based on Veda mantras. The key is to have an attitude of submission and a desire for nothing other than self-realization and to do homam without any expectations whatsoever. Then there are no risks.

The procedure taught in this document contains just a few Veda mantras, which are not very difficult to pronounce.

(6) *Misconception*: Those who are not born in a Brahmin family cannot perform homam.

Comment: One's varna (caste) is not to be determined solely from the family one is born in. There are examples of men born to parents belonging to various castes performing *tapascharya* and becoming rishis. Maharshi Viswamitra, who taught the Savitru Gayatri mantra, was a kshatriya by birth. Maharshi Valmiki, who taught Brahma Jnana to Maharshi Bharadwaja, was a shoodra by birth.

One who has affinity to knowledge is a Brahmin (scholar). One who has affinity to power and authority is a kshatriya (warrior). One who has affinity to money is a vaisya (trader). One who has affinity to carnal pleasures is a shoodra (worker). If a person born in a Brahmin family is after money, he becomes a vaisya and not a Brahmin. On the other hand, if a person born in a vaisya family desires nothing but knowledge and self-realization, he automatically becomes a Brahmin and very fit to perform homam.

Irrespective of the caste of birth, one who is interested in knowledge (especially knowledge of self) and one whose interest in power, money and pleasures is decaying is fit to perform homam.

(7) *Misconception*: Women cannot perform homam.

Comment: There is a big difference between men and women when it comes to the gross body. But, at the level of subtle body or causal body, there is no difference based on gender. All spiritual practices operate mainly at the subtle and causal level. So, it makes no sense to have a *total* ban on women performing homam.

However, there are some practical reasons behind the biases of tradition. Though there are no differences based on gender in the subtle body, the differences at the gross body level can come into play in the initial stages. However, for a homam like Sri Krishna homam, one cannot think of a valid reason to ban women. If homam can be avoided during the monthly period time, it is sufficient.

(8) *Misconception*: Homam is just like meditation. It is not any better. It does not really make any difference.

Comment: The proof of the pudding is in eating it. If one tries performing a homam to the best of one's ability on a daily basis for a few months, one will know what homam can do! After doing homam for several months, one will find that all other sadhanas one does become more effective as a result of homam.

(9) *Misconception:* One should get a priest to do homam and not do it oneself.

Comment: Let us revisit a previous analogy. If one wants to be nice to one's parents to get their money, one may engage someone who will act on one's behalf to get the money of parents. But, if one's sole purpose is to just love one's parents and show that love, it is better to do it directly than to engage other people.

(10) *Misconception:* Before doing homam with any mantra, one must do japam of that mantra by a count that is ten times the homam count. For example, one must do japam by a count of 10,000 before one does homam by a count of 1,000.

Comment: This convention is not without reason. The true meaning of this convention is that homam is ten times more powerful than japam. If one does a mantra 1,000 in a homam, it is *equivalent* to doing the mantra 10,000 in japam. If one wants, one can offer the mantra entirely in external fire and there is no need to do any japam before doing homam.

All thumb rules and conventions have exceptions. If a rishi with a very strong internal fire does dhyanam, it is equivalent to a homam and the "ten times" rule does not apply. However, for most normal people, homam is ten times more powerful than japam. The bottomline is that the strength and the purity of the medium that accommodates the presence of the deity who receives the mantra will decide the effectiveness of the mantra.

About This Document

This document describes a short procedure for performing Sri Krishna homam, which takes 30-45 minutes. This document is for those who are interested in performing Sri Krishna homam by themselves every day or week or month. This document is prepared based on a Bhagavad Gita Homam procedure taught in tradition. The procedure taught here is simple enough to do daily and yet retains all the important steps in a full-fledged traditional Vedic homam. Those who want an even simpler procedure with fewer mantras may refer to **Appendix A** for a **super-short procedure** with **bare minimum** mantras.

One should consult one's elders and gurus and decide whether one is allowed to perform a homam or not. If one thinks one is allowed to do homam and is interested in doing homam on a regular basis but does not know how to do it, then one can use this document to learn *one* way to do it. If one's gurus have taught one a different procedure, one may use the procedure taught by one's gurus. This document is for the benefit of those who do *not* know *any* procedure and want to learn *some* procedure to do homam. Those who learnt a slightly different procedure from the previous versions of this document need not worry and either follow what they have already learnt or switch to the procedure in this document.

Correct Attitude

While it is good to follow the procedure faithfully, it is even more important to surrender oneself to god, leave ego and identify one's self with the deity in the fire when performing the homam. If that is there, all other minor errors will have no negative effect. If that is not there, even an impeccably performed homam will not have any tangible effect. Like mentioned earlier, the goal is to melt ego (I-ness or sense of self) and create a vacuum within oneself, so that the deity can fill it. Complete devotion, single-minded focus on deity/mantra/procedure and minimization of the activity of body and mind can help one achieve that eventually.

If one has an over-active mind, doing pranayama before homam can be useful. The time around sunrise in the morning is a particularly conducive to a pleasant Sri Krishna homam.

Materials Needed

Must have

- One homa kundam¹ (a copper container with preferably a square shaped base). If a homa kundam is not available, one can dig a square shaped pit in the ground (with 1-2 foot sides and half to one foot deep) and arrange a few layers of bricks around the pit.
- Dry coconut halves (available in Indian stores) or wood (for burning)
- Ghee (clarified butter) from cow's milk. It is available in Indian stores. If unable to find, just get some butter and melt it in low heat. After it melts, some black stuff will separate from the melted liquid. Filter out the black deposit and use the liquid. It will solidify after a time. Before the homam, melt it again and use it.
- A wooden spoon/ladle to put ghee into the fire
- Some akshatas. Those can be made by mixing raw (uncooked) white (or brown) rice grains with a drop of sesame oil (or some other oil) and a pinch of turmeric powder. Instead of turmeric powder, one can also use vermilion (kumkum) powder used for the dot on the forehead.
- A small lamp, consisting of a wick that can be lit in sesame oil/ghee. A candle can also be used as an alternative, though it is better to burn ghee or sesame oil than wax.
- A match box to light fire
- One tumbler or cup to store water. It should preferably be made of silver or copper or clay. If unavailable, you may use steel or glass.
- One spoon (preferably silver or copper)
- Some water

Optional

- A small idol of Krishna or Vishnu. If you have none, use a metallic coin or any metallic object. Actually, you can do without any idol and just invoke Sri Krishna in fire.

¹ If in India, search for "Havan Kund" on <http://shopping.rediff.com>. If in US, search for "Kund" on <http://indousplaza.com>.

- A mixture of various auspicious materials known as the *havan samagri* (available in India stores), if possible.
- Some sandalwood powder, turmeric powder and kumkum (vermilion) powder
- Some flowers or flower petals
- Some sesame seeds, some mamra/murmura (puffed white rice), some nuts, some mildly popped corn and other materials that can be offered in fire. Small fruits are also fine. Honey can also be used. All these are optional. The absolute minimum needed is coconut pieces and ghee.
- Some darbhas (dried blades of sacred grass). Check with a local temple priest to find out how to procure them. If darbhas are unavailable, you may think of creative alternatives. For example, find some other dry grass or dry leaves or just thin twigs and pray to your ishta devata (favorite deity) before the homam to make them acceptable.
- An incense stick (agarbatti) if available and a holder to stick it to (a banana can be used instead)
- Camphor and a container or plate for lighting camphor and offering haarati
- Some food that you can offer to god. Eggs, meat and seafood should not be used in that food. In fact, do not *eat* eggs, meat and seafood on the day of homam. Onion, garlic, strong spices and too much of chillies should also be avoided in the food cooked for God. Fruits are also fine. Just sugar or brown sugar or rock candy sugar or jaggery can be offered to god too. When using sugar, please note that the normal white refined sugar used these days has bone ash in it. Brown sugar, vegetarian sugar or jaggery are to be preferred.
- Some milk, if available.

Preparation Before Homam

- (1) Instead of arranging homa kundam directly on the floor, place a wood plank or something on the floor, wrapped with aluminum foil (or some such thing), and put 4 bricks of the same height on it and place the homa kundam on the bricks. Thus, there is some air and a wooden plank under the homa kundam and the floor does not get heated up.
- (2) If you want easy cleaning, place some aluminum foils on the floor all around the plank containing homa kundam. If ghee or something is spilled in that area, it is easy to clean.
- (3) If you want, you can also cover the interior of homa kundam with some aluminum foils, so that it is easy to clean.
- (4) Make some food items to offer to god. You can just use rock sugar candy or raisins or dates or fruits or jaggery also. Please see the notes in the previous section on this.
- (5) Cook a little plain white rice. I put a few grains of rice and a little water in a small container and put it in microwave oven before my homam and cooked rice is ready at the end when I need it. If this is not possible, take a banana or apple or some other fruit and make it into 6 slices.
- (6) Fill water in the tumbler/cup and place the spoon in it.
- (7) Make a seat for yourself in front of the homa kundam. Ideally you should be facing east, i.e. homa kundam should be on the east from you. On the east of the homa kundam, place a small plate or a wooden plank, make a pile of some rice grains on it and place the idol (or a metal/clay object such as a coin) on it. You can decorate based on your ability and taste. An idol is optional. You can worship Sri Krishna directly in fire.

- (8) From the middle of the western edge of the homam kundam, draw two parallel red lines with kumkum (vermilion) powder towards your seat. They should go east-west and connect homa kundam to your seat. Melt the ghee and place the bowl containing it on those lines.
- (9) Cut dry coconuts into small pieces. Pieces of 1 inch x 1 inch size are useful.
- (10) *Important:* Do not consume any food within 3-4 hours before the homam (atleast one hour). Evacuate the bowels before homam and take bath. Stomach should be empty during a homam for the best experience.

Homam Procedure

Anujnaa (Permission)

Before starting the homam, think in your mind of Mother Earth who is bearing you, Lord Ganesha who removes obstacles, your ishta devata (favorite deity), your parents, the rishis of your gothra (if you know them), all the rishis and all your gurus. Then say the following, while mentally requesting all the gods to co-operate with your homam.

om ṛddhyāsmā havyairnamāsoṣadyaḥ | miṭraṁ devaṁ miṭradheyaṁ no astu | anūrādhān
haviṣā vardhayantaḥ | śataṁ jīvema śaradaḥ savirāḥ |

If you have a “pavitram” (a ring made of darbha or a special ring made of metal), wear it now. If you don’t have a pavitram, take any ring that you have, pray to your ishta devata and wear it. It should be worn on the right hand ring finger. If you don’t have a ring, don’t worry and move on.

Aachamanam (sipping water to purify)

Take a little water from the tumbler into your right hand with a spoon. Drink the water after saying the first item below. Take more water with the spoon into your hand, say the second item below and drink it. Take more water, say the third item below and drink it. Imagine that Vishnu who is within you is getting that water.

om keśavāya svāhā | om nārāyaṇāya svāhā | om mādhavāya svāhā |

Vighneswara Pooja (worshipping the remover of obstacles)

In order to not have any obstacles in the pooja, we have to pray to Ganesha in the beginning. Just read the following verses:

śuklāambaradharaṁ viṣṇuṁ śaśivaraṇaṁ caturbhujam | prasannavadanaṁ dhyāyet sarva
vighnopaśāntaye || agajānana padmārkaṁ gajānanamaharṇiṣam | anekadaṁ taṁ bhaktānām
ekadantaṁ upāsmahē || vakratuṇḍa mahākāya koṭisūryasamaprabha | nirvighnaṁ kuru me
deva sarvakāryeṣu sarvadā ||

Pray within your mind to Ganesha to remove obstacles from your homam. If you have time, energy and inclination (or when you are doing a longer version), you can even make a small Ganesha idol with turmeric and water and do shodasopachaara pooja to the idol. But just reading the above verses and praying to Ganesha in mind should suffice for a short homam that is performed on a regular basis.

Praanaayaamam (restraining the life force)

Take some akshatas (see “Materials Needed” for a description of how to make them) in the left palm, place the left palm on the left lap, hold the nostrils with the right hand and do praanaayaamam. Place the little finger and ring finger on the left nostril and thumb on the right nostril. Close the left nostril, open the right nostril by releasing the thumb and say the Gayatri mantra mentally while gently breathing in through the right nostril (without making any breathing sound). If you don’t know the Gayatri mantra, use one of the following mantras:

om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya om namaśśivāya om gaṁ gaṇapataye namaḥ

After saying the mantra once, close the right nostril with the thumb and say the mantra once more while retaining the air previously breathed in. Then open the left nostril by relaxing the little and ring fingers and say the mantra for the third time while breathing out through the left nostril. When done, say the mantra once more, while breathing in through the left nostril. Then close the left nostril with little and ring fingers and say the mantra for the fifth time while retaining the air previously breathed in. Then release the thumb and say the mantra for the sixth time while breathing out through the right nostril. While reading the mantra all the six times, contemplate the formless supreme Brahman (supreme soul of the entire universe) that fills each being of this universe and also the air being breathed in and out. If you want, you can imagine a specific form (such as your ishta devata) also and imagine that your ishta devata fills the entire universe. If you want, you can repeat the above sequence as many times as you comfortably can.

Sankalpam (taking the vow)

Now, declare your intention of doing a homam to please Sri Krishna. Transfer the akshatas to the right hand, place the open left palm (empty) on right lap, place the closed right palm containing akshatas on the left palm. Then say the following, while mentally thinking that you are going to do a homa to the best of your ability, to please Sri Krishna.

om mamopātta samasta duritakṣayadvārā śrī parameśvara prītyartham śrī kṛṣṇa prasāda siddhyartham adya śubhadine śubhamuhūrte śrī kṛṣṇa homakarma yathāśakti kariṣye

Then leave the akshatas from your hand in front of the homa kundam or the idol and sprinkle a little bit of water on the palms. Now light the ghee/oil lamp.

Kalasa Suddhi (water purification)

When you are doing a long version of the homam, you can establish a kalasam in the northeastern side of the homa kundam and invoke Varuna in it and do shodasopachaara pooja to Varuna and read Punyaaha Vaachanam (Pavamana Sooktam). For a short homam, you can just do the following.

Place a few akshatas and a flower (if available) in the tumbler containing water. If you can, put dhenu mudra (else, don't worry). Say the following syllable 11 times to purify the water.

vaṁ

Now read the following and think that auspicious essence of various rivers of the world is entering the water in the tumbler.

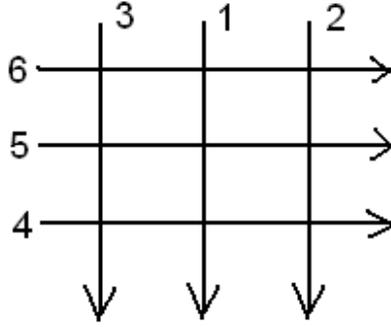
gaṅge ca yamune caiva godāvāri sarasvati |
narmade sindhu kāveri jale'smin sannidhiṁ kuru ||
amṛtaṁ bhavatu

Then take a little water from the tumbler with a flower or flower petal or spoon and sprinkle it on yourself, on homa kundam, on the idol you are going to use and other materials to be used in homam (like fruits, flowers and food).

Take a darbha (see "Materials Needed" for a description) and draw 6 lines with the darbha on the base of the homakundam, in the same order as shown in Figure 1. The direction in which each line is drawn is indicated by the direction of the arrow in the figure. Say the following six mantras while drawing the six lines (respectively).

om brahmaṇe namaḥ |
om yamāya namaḥ |
om somāya namaḥ |
om rudrāya namaḥ |
om viṣṇave namaḥ |
om indrāya namaḥ |

Figure 1



Agni Pratishthaapana (fire installation)

Take a darbha. Place it inside the homa kundam (on the base), with the tip of the darbha facing east and the other end facing west. Take another darbha. Place it inside, with the tip of the darbha facing north and the other end facing south.

Take a piece of camphor, light it from the lamp and place it in the middle of the homa kundam, while saying:

om bhūrbhuvassuvarom

Place one or more dry coconut pieces (or a log/twig/piece of wood) above the burning camphor and make sure that it catches fire. Next pray to the fire god using the following mantra from RigVeda. It requests the fire god to keep an inauspicious form of fire called “kravyaada” and carry the offerings to gods through the auspicious form of fire called “jaatavedas”.

kravyādamāgnīm prahiṇomi dūram yamarājñō gacchatu ripravāhaḥ |
ihaivāyamitaro jātavedā devebhyo havyam vahatu prajānan |

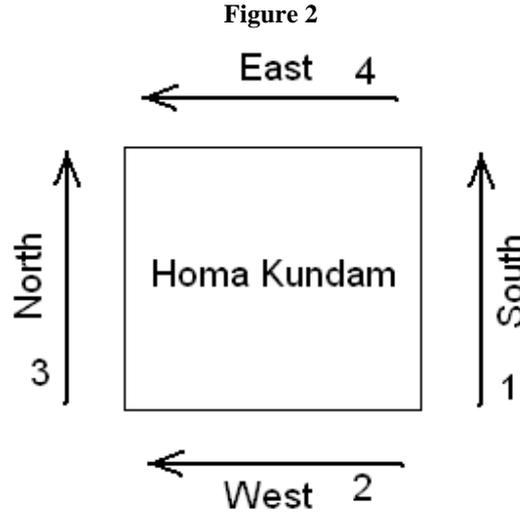
Now we have to do samskara (refinement) to the fire. Pour 8 drops of ghee in the fire while saying the following mantra 8 times.

om bhūrbhuvassuvaḥ svāhāḥ

Take 2 or more darbhas (or twigs). Place them outside the homa kundam, along the eastern boundary. The tips should be facing north and the other end facing south. Then take another 2 or more darbhas and place them on the southern boundary, with tips facing east and the other end facing west. Then take 2 or more darbhas and place them on the western boundary, with tips facing north. Then take 2 or more darbhas and place them on the northern boundary, with tips facing east. If you do homam on a regular basis, you can leave these darbhas/twigs around the homa kundam there is no need to do this step every time.

Take some water with the spoon and sprinkle it outside the homa kundam, on its four boundaries while reading the following 4 mantras. The order and direction of sprinkling is shown in Figure 2. For example, first sprinkle water from the southwestern corner to the southeastern corner, as shown by the arrow marked “1”. Then follow other arrows marked as 2, 3 and 4.

adīte'numanyasva | anūmate'numanyasva | sarāsvate'numanyasva | deva savitaḥ prasūva |



Now pray to Agni (fire god) with the following mantra:

caṭvāri śṛṅgāstrayo asya pādā dve śīrṣe saptahastāso asya |
 tridhā baddho vṛṣabho rorāvīti maḥo devo martyāṃ āviveśa |
 eṣa hi devaḥ pradīśo nu sarvāḥ pūrvō hi jātaḥ sa u garbhe antaḥ |
 sa vijāyamānaḥ sa janīṣyamāṇaḥ pratyaṅmukhāstiṣṭhati viśvatōmukhaḥ |
 prāṅmukho deva | he agne | mamābhimukho bhava |

Now think within your mind of Lord Ganesha, your ishta devata (favorite deity), rishis of your gotra (if you know them), all rishis, your gurus, various gods and other beings of this universe.

Dikpaalaka Pooja (worshipping the rulers of directions)

Now, take some akshatas and also some flowers (if available) and offer them to the rulers of directions. Starting with the eastern edge of the homa kundam, go clockwise (*i.e.* east, southeast, south, southwest *etc*) and offer akshatas and flowers in the eight directions. You can place them on the edges of the homa kundam. After the eight directions, offerings are made to Brahma (ruler of the upward direction) in the middle of northeast and east and to Sesha (ruler of the downward direction) in the middle of southwest and west.

Then offer akshatas and flowers to Agni in the middle of the homa kundam. Finally, touch your heart and offer respect to the self (soul). For the 8+2+1+1=12 offerings, say the following 12 mantras:

om indrāya namaḥ | om agnaye namaḥ | om yamāya namaḥ | om nirṛtaye namaḥ | om varuṇāya namaḥ | om vāyave namaḥ | om somāya namaḥ | om īśānāya namaḥ | om brahmaṇe namaḥ | om śeṣāya namaḥ | om agnaye namaḥ | om ātmane namaḥ |

Poorvaangam (preliminary offerings)

Now hold the wooden spoon/ladle pointing from northwest towards southeast and offer a ghee drop in the fire for Prajapati (progenitor of all beings), with the following mantra.

om prajāpataye svāhā | prajāpataya idaṁ na mama |

Now hold the wooden spoon/ladle pointing from southwest towards northeast and offer a ghee drop in the fire for Indra (ruler of gods), with the following mantra.

om indrāya svāhā | indrāyedaṁ na mama |

Offer a little ghee to Agni (fire god) in the middle of the fire with the following mantra:

om agnaye svāhā | agnaya idaṁ na mama |

Then offer a little ghee to Soma (god of nourishment and well-being) in the upper half of the northern side of the homa kundam with the following mantra:

om somāya svāhā | somāyedaṁ na mama |

Now, we have to offer a “forgiveness offering” to Prajapati again to request his forgiveness for all the mistakes that happened in the homa upto this point, with the following mantra:

ārambhaprabhṛti etatkṣaṇaparyantaṁ madhye sambhāvita samasta doṣa prāyaścittārthaṁ sarva prāyaścittaṁ hoṣyāmi | om bhūrbhuvassuvaḥ svāhā | prajāpataya idaṁ na mama |

After making an offering to the basic gods as shown above, one can invoke Ganesha in the fire. After the above preliminary offerings and before invoking Ganesha, one can also make offerings to rishis. One can, for example, make offerings to the rishis of one’s lineage. It is optional.

Quick Homam for Mahaganapathi

Before calling the main deity of homam (Sri Krishna) into fire, a quick pooja of Mahaganapathi in fire needs to be done for the removal of obstacles. Mahaganapathi can be invoked in fire while chanting the following.

om gaṁ gaṇapataye namaḥ| asuṇī te punārasmāsu cakṣuḥ punaḥ prāṇamiha nō dehi bhogaṁ|
jyokpāśyema sūryāmuccarāntamanūmate mṛḷayā naḥ svasti| om śrī mahāgaṇapati
prāṇaśaktyai namaḥ| atra āgaccha| āvāhito bhava| sthāpito bhava| sannihito bhava|
sanniruddho bhava| avakuṅṭhito bhava| prasīda prasīda|

Now, we have to offer worship with several servies to Mahaganapathi in the fire. Say the following and offer sandalwood powder/paste to Mahaganapathi in the fire. You can also offer turmeric powder and kumkum.

laṁ pṛthivyātmane namaḥ| gandhaṁ samarpayāmi|

Say the following and offer a flower (or a flower petal) to Mahaganapathi in the fire.

haṁ ākāśātmane namaḥ| puṣpaṁ samarpayāmi|

Say the following and offer dhoopam (incense) to Mahaganapathi in the fire and the idol. Light the tip of the incense stick, let the fire burn brightly and then extinguish the fire. There should be no fire on the stick but smoke coming from the burning tip. Show the smoke to the fire in the homa kundam. You can also offer the incense stick completely into fire.

yaṁ vāyvātmane namaḥ| dhūpam āghrāpayāmi|

Say the following and show the deepam (light/lamp) to Mahaganapathi in the fire.

raṁ agnyātmane namaḥ| dīpaṁ darśayāmi|

Say the following and offer some food to Mahaganapathi in the fire. You can use cooked food or a fruit or jaggery or sugar. Show it to the fire and offer a little bit into the fire. If you cooked only one item, keep it for Sri Krishna and use something else for Mahaganapathi. You can offer just a raisin or a little sugar also.

vaṁ amṛtātmane namaḥ| naivedyaṁ samarpayāmi|

Say the following and offer some akshatas to Mahaganapathi in the fire. This mantra means that we are offering “all services” to Him.

saṁ sarvātmane namaḥ| sarvopacārān samarpayāmi|

Now say the following offer ghee (or other allowed materials mentioned at the beginning) into fire for Mahaganapathi. Repeat that 4 or 8 or 12 times.

om gaṁ gaṇapataye namaḥ svāhā|

Praana Pratishthaapanaa (invocation of main deity)

Now we have to invoke the deity in the idol and the fire. If you know how to do anganyaasam and karanyaasam, do it while saying the following. Otherwise, just read the following.

asya śrī prānapratiṣṭhāpana mantrasya brahma viṣṇu maheśvarā ṛṣayaḥ ṛgyajussāmātharvāṇi
chandāṁsi śrī kṛṣṇa paramātmā devatā| klām bijaṁ| klīm śaktiḥ| klaum̐ kīlakam̐| klām
aṅguṣṭhābhyām̐ namaḥ| klīm tarjanībhyām̐ namaḥ| klūm̐ madhyamābhyām̐ namaḥ| klaim̐
anāmikābhyām̐ namaḥ| klaum̐ kaniṣṭhikābhām̐ namaḥ| klaḥ karatala karaprṣṭhābhyām̐ namaḥ|
klām̐ hṛdayāya namaḥ| klīm̐ śirase svāhā| klūm̐ śikhāyai vaṣaṭ| klaim̐ kavacāya hum̐| klaum̐
netratrayāya vausaṭ| klaḥ astrāya phaṭ| bhūrbhuvassuvaromiti digbandhaḥ|

dhyānam̐ - vasudevasutam̐ devam̐ kamsa cāṅūramardanam̐| devakī paramānandam̐ kṛṣṇam̐
vande jagadguruṁ||

Now invoke the deity in the fire and the idol with the following mantra. While saying it, imagine that Sri Krishna who is in your own heart is entering the fire and the idol.

om klām̐ klīm̐ klaum̐ yaṁ raṁ laṁ vaṁ śaṁ ṣaṁ saṁ haṁ ḷaṁ kṣaṁ| om haṁsaḥ so'haṁ
so'haṁ haṁsaḥ| śrī kṛṣṇasya prāṇa iha prāṇaḥ| jīva iha sthitaḥ| sarvendriyāṇi vānmanastvak
cakṣuḥ śrotra jihvāghrāṇa prāṇāpānavyānodānasamānāḥ ihaivāgatya sukham̐ ciraṁ tiṣṭhantu
svāhā| sānnidhyam̐ kurvantu svāhā| asunī te punarāsmāsu cakṣuḥ punaḥ prāṇamīha nō dehi
bhogaṁ| jyokpāśyema sūryamuccarantamanumate mṛḷayā naḥ svasti| klām̐ klīm̐ klaum̐| om śrī
kṛṣṇa prāṇaśaktyai namaḥ| atra āgaccha|

Now read the following and make the aavaahani, samsthaapani, sannidhaapani, sannirodhini and avakunthana *mudras* with your hands if you know them. If not, don't worry and just read.

āvāhito bhava| sthāpito bhava| sannihito bhava| sanniruddho bhava| avakuṅṭhito bhava| deva
prasīda prasīda| deva sarva jagannātha yāvaddhomāvasānakam̐| tāvattvam̐ prītibhāvena
mūrtau agnau ca sannidhim̐ kuru|

While saying this, pray to Lord Sri Krishna in your mind and ask him to *stay* in the fire and the idol till the *end* of the homam. Now, till the end of the homam, *you* should *firmly* believe that Krishna *is in the fire* and treat him with *respect* and *love*.

Panchopachaara Pooja (worship of god)

Now, we have to offer worship with several services to Sri Krishna in the fire and idol. There are several options. One can do a panchopachaara pooja with 5 services or a shodasopachara pooja with 16 services or a chatusshashtyupachara pooja with 64 services. For simplicity, a panchopachara pooja is recommended in a homam. Those who have a lot of time and want to

perform a shodasopachara pooja may refer to Appendix B and use that procedure instead of what is given in this section.

Say the following and offer sandalwood powder/paste to Sri Krishna in the fire and the idol. You can also offer turmeric powder and kumkum.

laṁ pṛthivyātmāne namaḥ| gandhaṁ samarpayāmi|

Say the following and offer a flower (or a flower petal) to Sri Krishna in the fire and the idol.

ham ākāśātmāne namaḥ| puṣpaṁ samarpayāmi|

Say the following and offer dhoopam (incense) to Sri Krishna in the fire and the idol. Light the tip of the incense stick, let the fire burn brightly and then extinguish the fire. There should be no fire on the stick but smoke coming from the burning tip. Show the smoke to the fire in the homa kundam.

yaṁ vāyvātmanē namaḥ| dhūpam āghrāpayāmi|

Say the following and show the deepam (light/lamp) to Sri Krishna in the fire and the idol.

ram agnyātmāne namaḥ| dīpaṁ darśayāmi|

Say the following and offer some food to Sri Krishna in the fire and the idol. You can use cooked food or a fruit or jaggery or sugar. Show it to the fire and idol and offer a little bit into the fire.

If you made only one food item, it is a good idea to offer it at the end of the homam. There will be a naivedyam (food offering) again. Offer something else for now. The offering at the end is the main one.

vam amṛtātmāne namaḥ| naivedyaṁ samarpayāmi|

Say the following and offer some akshatas to Sri Krishna in the fire and the idol. This mantra means that we are offering “all services” to Him.

saṁ sarvātmanē namaḥ| sarvopacārān samarpayāmi|

Parivaara Devata Aahutis (offerings to associates)

If you are in a hurry, make one offering of ghee with the following to the associates of Sri Krishna.

om rādhādibhyaḥ śrī kṛṣṇa parivāra devatābhyaḥ svāhā|

If you have more time, read the following instead and make an offering of ghee whenever you encounter svaahaa (svāhā).

om rādhāyai svāhā| om rukmiṇyai svāhā| om satyabhāmāyai svāhā| om jāmbavatyai svāhā|
om nāgnajityai svāhā| om mitravindāyai svāhā| om kāḷindyai svāhā| om lakṣmaṇāyai svāhā|
om suśīlāyai svāhā|
om devakyaḥ svāhā| om vasudevāya svāhā| om yaśodāyai svāhā| om nandāya svāhā| om
subhadrāyai svāhā| om balabhadrāya svāhā| om gopēbhyāḥ svāhā| om gopībhyāḥ svāhā|
om vāsudevāya svāhā| om saṅkarṣaṇāya svāhā| om pradyumnāya svāhā| om aniruddhāya
svāhā| om śāntyai svāhā| om śrīyai svāhā| om sarasvatyai svāhā| om ratyai svāhā|
om arjunāya svāhā| om dārukāya svāhā| om viṣvaksenāya svāhā| om sātīyakaye svāhā| om
garuḍāya svāhā| om nārādāya svāhā| om parvatāya svāhā|

Pradhaana Homam (main part)

Now, you can offer any mantras of Sri Krishna you want. Suggested count for each mantra is 4 or 8 or 12 or 16 or 21 or 28 or 108 or 1008. Pick a count with each mantra and try to meet that count. At the end of the mantra, you have to add the following (if it is not already present as a part of the mantra itself) and then make an offering in the fire.

svāhā^u

When making the last offering with a mantra (*i.e.* you are going to stop that mantra after this offering and switch to a different mantra), you add the following instead of the above:

vauṣaṭ

The offering can be a drop of ghee or sesame seeds or murmura/mamra (puffed white rice) or havan samagri or small dry coconut pieces or small pieces of darbha. If you are doing homam on a big scale with a big fire, you can even put banana slices, full coconuts, various fruits, nuts (cashews, almonds etc), dates, raisins, sugar cane pieces, several sweets and snacks *etc.* But, if you are doing on a small scale with a small fire, stick to sesame seeds, dry coconut pieces, puffed white rice and ghee drops. At any cost, avoid spicy substances like any kind of pepper, cinnamon, cloves etc and products containing eggs, meat etc. In general, sweet substances are better. Just offering ghee when you do not have any other substances is also fine.

The following mantras of Sri Krishna may be used. But you can really use any mantra you like. Read a mantra several times before moving onto a different mantra. It is advisable to pick **any one** mantra you like the most and repeat it as many times as you can, instead of doing a little bit of several mantras. If one wants water, one should dig deep in one place instead of digging a little in ten places. The 1st one is mahamantra as taught by Srila Prabhupada in ISKCON, just as Valmiki was taught “raama” mantra as “maraa”. The 2nd one is another variation of mahamantra as given in scriptures. The 3rd one is the vijaya mantra. The 4th one is a powerful beejaakshara

mantra. The 5th one is a very simple beejaakshara mantra. The 6th one is the powerful dwadasaakshari mantra. The 7th one is a [nichrud-]Gaayatri mantra. **All** these mantras are **powerful** and pick the one you are most **attracted to** and stick to it in your homam.

om hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare| hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare||
svāhā|
om hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare| hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare||
svāhā|
om śrī rāma jaya rāma jaya jaya rāma| śrī kṛṣṇa jaya kṛṣṇa jaya jaya kṛṣṇa| svāhā|
om klīm kṛṣṇāya govindāya gopijana vallabhāya svāhā|
om klīm kṛṣṇāya namaḥ| svāhā|
om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya| svāhā|
om vāsudevāya vidmahe| devakī putrāya dhīmahi| tannaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ pracodayāt| svāhā|

Another alternative to the above mantras is to chant Krishnaashtakam. Repeat the following 8 verses as many times as you want, with offerings at each svaahaa (svāhā).

vasudeva sutam devam kamsacānūra mardanam| devakī paramānandam kṛṣṇam vande
jagadgurum|| svāhā|
atasī puṣpa saṅkāśam hāra nūpura śobhitam| ratna kaṅkaṇa keyūram kṛṣṇam vande
jagadgurum|| svāhā|
kuṭilālaka saṁyuktam pūrṇacandra nibhānanam| vilasatkuṇḍaladharam kṛṣṇam vande
jagadgurum|| svāhā|
mandāra gandha saṁyuktam cāruhāsam caturbhujam| barhipiñchāvācūḍāṅgam kṛṣṇam vande
jagadgurum|| svāhā|
utphulla padma patrākṣam nilajīmūta sannibham| yādavānām śīroratnam kṛṣṇam vande
jagadgurum|| svāhā|
rukmiṇī keḷi saṁyuktam pītāmbara suśobhitam| avāpta tulasī gandham kṛṣṇam vande
jagadgurum|| svāhā|
gopikānām kucadvandva kuṅkumānkita vakṣasam| śrīniketaṁ maheṣvāsam kṛṣṇam vande
jagadgurum|| svāhā|
śrīvatsāṅkam mahoraskam vanamālāvibhūṣitam| śaṅkha cakra dharam devam kṛṣṇam vande
jagadgurum|| svāhā|

Punah Pooja (worship again)

After all the offerings with mantras, we offer a quick worship again to Sri Krishna in the fire.

Say the following and offer some food to Sri Krishna in the fire and the idol.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya namaḥ| naivedyam samarpayāmi|

Light a small camphor piece in a plate and show it to the fire while saying the following. At the end, you can throw the camphor piece into fire.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya namaḥ | nīrājanam samarpayāmi |

If one has time, a panchopachara pooja can also be done as the punah pooja. But the above two things will suffice.

Now get up and do *pradakshinas* to the homa kundam. If someone stands on the roof (or in the sky) and looks down at you, it should look like you are going around the homa kundam in the clockwise direction. Do one or three rounds and then sit down again in front of fire.

Uttaraangam (vote of thanks)²

Now, offer one drop of ghee to Prajapati, then the controllers of the three worlds (bhuh – fire god, bhuvah – wind god, who controls space too, suvah – sun god for all the non-material spiritual realms), to Agni who processes the food for gods and makes it consumable and finally Prajapati again. Read the following and offer a drop of ghee at each “swaahaa”.

om prajāpate na tvadetānyanyo viśvā jātāni pari tā babhūva | yatkāmāste juhūmastanno astu
vayaṁ syāma patayo rayiṇām | svāhā | prajāpataya idaṁ na mama ||
om bhūḥ svāhā | agnaya idaṁ na mama ||
om bhuvaḥ svāhā | vāyava idaṁ na mama ||
om suvaḥ svāhā | sūryāyedaṁ na mama ||
yadāsyā karmaṇo tyarīricāṁ yadvānyūnamihākaram | agniṣṭat sviṣṭakṛdvidvān sarvaṁ sviṣṭam
suhūtaṁ karotu svāhā | agnaye sviṣṭakṛta idaṁ na mama ||
om bhūrbhuvassuvaḥ svāhā | prajāpataya idaṁ na mama ||

Now do pranaayaamam again. The procedure of pranaayaamam is explained earlier.

Now, make three offerings to the fire god, asking for forgiveness for any mistakes committed knowingly or unknowingly, while using fire as the medium. Read the following and offer a drop of the ghee in the fire at each “swaahaa”.

anājñātāṁ yadājñātāṁ yajñasya kriyate mithu | agne tadāsyā kalpayā tvaṁ hi vettha
yathātatham | svāhā | agnaya idaṁ na mama ||
puruṣasammito yajño yajñāḥ puruṣasammitaḥ | agne tadāsyā kalpayā tvaṁ hi vettha
yathātatham | svāhā | agnaya idaṁ na mama ||
yatpākatrā manasā dīnadakṣā na | yajñasya manvate martāsaḥ | agniṣṭaddhotā kratuvidvijānaḥ |
yajīṣṭho devān ṛtuṣo yajāti | svāhā | agnaya idaṁ na mama ||

² Skip this and go to the next section to find a shorter procedure for uttaraangam.

Next, three offerings are made to the fire god, wind god and sun god, the controllers of the three worlds. Read the following and offer a drop of the ghee in the fire at each “swaahaa”.

om bhūḥ svāhā^{||} agnaya idam na mama||
om bhuvaḥ svāhā^{||} vāyava idam na mama||
om suvaḥ svāhā^{||} sūryāyedaṁ na mama||

One final offering to Prajapati is made to beg for forgiveness for various mistakes made in the homam, with respect to pronunciation, actions, procedure, devotion, materials used *etc.* Read the following and offer of drop of ghee.

asmin homakarmani madhye sambhāvita samasta mantralopa tantralopa kriyālopa bhaktilopa śraddhālopa niyamalopa niṣṭhālopa dravyalopādi samasta doṣa prāyaścittārthaṁ sarva prāyaścittāhutim hoṣyāmi | om bhūrbhuvassuvaḥ svāhā^{||} prajāpataya idam na mama||

An offering to Vishnu and an offering to Rudra must be made. Read the following two lines and offer a drop of ghee for each line. Think of Vishnu and Shiva.

om śrī viṣṇave svāhā^{||} viṣṇave paramātmāna idam na mama||
om namo rudrāya paśupataye svāhā^{||} rudrāya paśupataya idam na mama||

After making an offering to Rudra, wash the hand once. You can simply sprinkle a little bit of water on the right palm for that purpose.

Uttaraangam – shorter version (vote of thanks)

When you are in a hurry, you can perform uttaraanham in a brief form by saying the following and making an offering of ghee with each line.

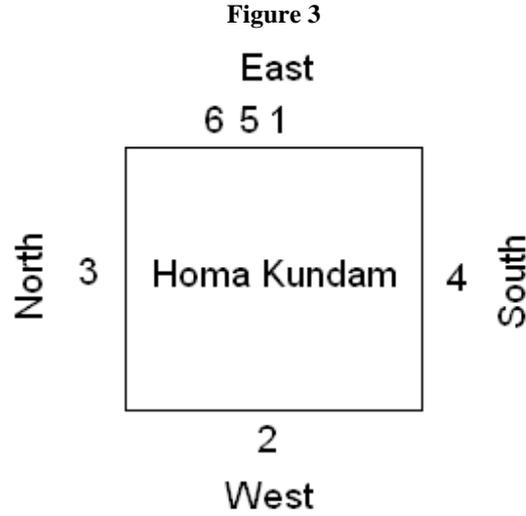
om bhūḥ svāhā^{||} agnaya idam na mama||
om bhuvaḥ svāhā^{||} vāyava idam na mama||
om suvaḥ svāhā^{||} sūryāyedaṁ na mama||
om bhūrbhuvassuvaḥ svāhā^{||} prajāpataya idam na mama||
om śrī viṣṇave svāhā^{||} viṣṇave paramātmāna idam na mama||
om namo rudrāya paśupataye svāhā^{||} rudrāya paśupataya idam na mama||

Suddhaanna Bali (sacrifice of pure rice)

Now, we have to offer bali (sacrifice to other associated beings). Get the cooked white rice (or banana slices or some other fruit slices or raisins). Just place a small token amount as bali. You need to place bali in six different places outside the homa kundam. First, place it on the east of the homa kundam. Then on the west, then on the north, then on the south and finally two more

on the east (a little north to the previous bali(s) placed in the east). The order and positions can be found in Figure 3. While offering balis in six places, the following sentence can be said:

om pārṣadebhyo namaḥ| baliṁ samarpayāmi|



The rice remaining after offering balis should be thrown away and not consumed. If cooked rice is not available, small banana slices or some other fruit slices can be used. Again, any fruit pieces left over after bali should be thrown away and not consumed.

Vasordhaaraa (stream of excellence)

Take a little ghee into the ladle and pour it slowly on the burning dry coconut pieces in the homa kundam while reading the third verse from “Rudra Chamakam”. It is given below.

Don’t pour too much ghee if you don’t want much smoke. Just take one teaspoonful of ghee in the wooden ladle and manage with it slowly. This ghee should be just enough to make the pieces burn well so that poornaahuti (about to be offered) burns well.

om śaṁ ca me mayaśca me priyaṁ ca me'nukāmaśca me kāmaśca me saumaṇaśca me
bhadraṁ ca me śreyaśca me vasyaśca me yaśaśca me bhagaśca me draviṇaṁ ca me yaṅtā ca me
dhartā ca me kṣemaśca me dhṛtiśca me viśvaṁ ca me mahaśca me saṁvicca me jñātraṁ ca me
sūśca me praśūśca me siraṁ ca me layaśca marṭaṁ ca me'mṛtaṁ ca me'yakṣmaṁ ca
me'nāmayacca me jīvātuśca me dirghāyutvaṁ ca me'namitraṁ ca me'bhayaṁ ca me sugaṁ ca
me śayanaṁ ca me sūśā ca me sudinaṁ ca me||

Poornaahuti

Now, we have to prepare a package for poornaahuti (“complete offering”). The normal procedure is to place a full dry coconut, some metal coins, some turmeric, some sandalwood,

some kumkum, some akshatas, samples of some of the materials used in homam as offerings in a cloth and tie the cloth.

For a simple homam with a small fire, you may take a dry coconut half and place a few akshatas, one coin, little sandalwood powder, turmeric powder, kumkum powder and samples of materials offered earlier in it. If you do a small homam everyday in a western country and need to minimize the smoke, you may put just a small coconut piece as poornaahuti. If you are doing homam in a big firepit that is dug in ground, you may want to experiment with a regular full coconut that has little water. It is a more accurate representation of the ego of a normal person.

Place the poornaahuti on the wooden ladle, say the mantra below and then place the poornaahuti in fire carefully with hand (if you drop it on a small fire from the wooden ladle, it can extinguish the fire and also loose materials can spill everywhere in the homa kundam).

om pūrṇāhutiṃ uttamāṃ juhōti | sarvaṃ vai pūrṇāhutiḥ | sarvāmevāpnoti | atho iyaṃ vai pūrṇāhutiḥ | asyāmeva pratitiṣṭhati |
om pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidaṃ pūrṇātpūrṇamudācyate | pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate ||
om klīm kṛṣṇāya pūrṇāhutiṃ samarpayāmi |

While (or after) placing the poornaahuti in the fire, say the following mantra.

om brahmārpaṇaṃ brahmahavir brahmāgnau brahmaṇā hutam | brahmaiva tena gantavyam
brahma karma samādhinā ||

Imagine that you are completely surrendering yourself to Sri Krishna. Poornaahuti basically means “complete surrender”. The full (or half) coconut used in the poornaahuti is a symbol of one’s head, *i.e.* ego (“I-ness”), which is to be sacrificed (surrendered) to Sri Krishna. Think that Sri Krishna fills the whole universe and that he is the true owner of your body, mind, existence, thoughts, knowledge and actions. Surrender to Him fully. Without that inner sense of complete surrender, an elaborate poornaahuti ritual with pristine materials has no meaning. Most Vedic rituals are symbolic of certain inner changes that you bring about within yourself, to remove obstacles within your sookshma sareera that are blocking self-knowledge. The purpose of Veda is the knowledge of self (Aatman) and all rituals are ultimately for that purpose. Doing rituals blindly is a good starting point, but at some stage, one has to wonder about the inner meaning.

Winding Up and Meditation

The fire god (Agni) has carried all our offerings to various gods. So the final offering is to him. Read the following and offer a drop of ghee in the fire.

sapta te agne samidhaḥ saptajihvāḥ sapta ṛṣayassaptaḥ dhāma priyāṇi | sapta hotrā sapta
dhātvā yajantīsaprayonīrāprṇasvā ghr̥tena svāhā | agnaye saptavata idaṃ na mama ||

Take some water in a spoon and sprinkle it around the homa kumdam as shown in Figure 2. This is similar to what we did at the beginning, but the mantras to say are slightly different. Instead of the four mantras used earlier, use the following four mantras when sprinkling water along the four arrows marked as 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Figure 2:

adite'nvāmaṁsthāḥ | anūmate'nvāmaṁsthāḥ | sarāsvate'nvāmaṁsthāḥ | deva savitaḥ prāsāvīḥ |

The ritual of homam cleanses one internally. The powerful divine presence in the fire has a great ability to cleanse one. Especially, a sincerely offered poornaahuti creates a lot of positive energy as it burns. One can take advantage of it by meditating in front of the fire as the poornaahuti burns. The time when the poornaahuti burns is the best time to meditate.

Sit still with a straight back in front of the fire and meditate. Make sure that the back is erect and yet not too tight. Make sure that the neck and head are also erect. Close the eyes, imagine your favorite deity in a form you like and meditate on that form with your favorite mantra. It can be the mantra with which you did homam. Try to forget about the your body and what you are doing and get into the mantra fully. Think that Sri Krishna is the only one that exists and the whole universe is his play. Think that all beings and all objects of this world are expressions of Sri Krishna's play. Think that Sri Krishna is the true Doer of all actions by all beings of this world. Your chances of losing consciousness of your body and immersing in the mantra fully are the maximum at this point of time than any other! Take advantage and meditate for atleast 5-10 minutes with maximum focus now. Consider this an essential part of the homam.

Rakshaa

Now, take the darbhas placed at the beginning outside the homa kundam on the western side (or new darbhas, if you did not place any darbhas along the boundaries due to lack of darbhas), apply a little ghee to them and place the tips in fire. When they catch fire, remove them from the fire, place them in a container and let the whole darbhas burn. The black ash you get is called "rakshaa" (protection). At the end of the homam, you can apply a little rakshaa to the forehead of the idol and then a little to your own forehead and the foreheads of others. This is believed to protect from evil forces. You can store the rakshaa for future use on important occasions.

If your fire is too small and does not last till this point, you may consider taking rakshaa before meditation.

It is not *necessary* to take raksha. One can skip this step. Alternately, one can skip now and later mix the ashes of the materials burnt in the homa kundam with ghee and use that as rakshaa.

Udvaasana (good bye)

Take a couple of darbhas in your right hand and a couple more darbhas with your left hand. Take some flowers or akshatas also if available. Hold the darbhas with the tips facing away from you and the bases in your hands. Now touch the two sides of the homakundam with the darbhas in the two hands. Then touch the idol with those darbhas and leave the akshatas and flowers on the god. Imagine that the energy from the homakundam has been transferred into the idol. To

simplify this, you can also place your fists containing a few akshatas on top of the northern and southern sides of homa kundam and then deposit the akshatas in those fists at the feet of the idol.

Say the following and show your heart with your hands. Imagine that Sri Mahaganapathi has exited the fire and came back into your heart.

asmādagneḥ śrīmahāgaṇapatim yathāsthānaṁ pratiṣṭhāpayāmi

Say the following and show your heart with your hands. Imagine that Sri Krishna has exited the fire and the idol and came back into your heart.

asmānmūrteṣca agneṣca śrī kṛṣṇaṁ yathāsthānaṁ pratiṣṭhāpayāmi

Now, we have to say goodbye to the fire god too. Say the following and bow to the fire god.

agne naya supathā rāye asmān viśvāni deva vāyunāni vidvān| yuyodhyaṣmajjuhurāṇameno
bhūyiṣṭhām te nama uktiṁ vidhema| agnaye namaḥ||

Conclusion

Say the following three verses. Think of Krishna and imagine that you are not the doer and Krishna is the doer who is acting through you. While you do it, place a few akshatas on the tips of the ring and middle fingers of the right hand, place the palm on the small deposit bowl and wash it such that the water and akshatas are deposited in the deposit bowl.

mantrahīnaṁ kriyāhīnaṁ bhaktihīnaṁ hutāśana| yaddhutaṁ tu mayā deva paripūrṇaṁ
tadastu te||
prāyaścittānyaśeṣāni tapaḥ karmātmakāni vai| yāni teṣāmaśeṣānām śrī kṛṣṇasmarānaṁ
paraṁ|| śrī kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa|
kāyena vācā manasendriyairvā buddhyātmanā vā prakṛteḥ svabhāvāt| karomi yadyat sakalam
parasmai nārāyaṇāyeti samarpayāmi||

Say the following finally. Imagine that Sri Sri Krishna became pleased with your homam. Surrender the doership of the homam to Krishna and pray for peace.

anena divya maṅgaḷa homena bhagavān sarvātmakaḥ śrī kṛṣṇaḥ prīyatām| om tatsat|
sarvam śrī kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu| om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ|

After this, you should not think of yourself as the doer of the homam just finished, for you have surrendered the doership to Krishna!

The naivedyam (food) you offered can be eaten now and served to others. The rakshaa (holy ash) can be mixed with a drop of ghee and applied on the forehead as a dot or a line.

If you used a kalasam (water pot) in addition to an idol to invoke the god, you can take a bath with the water in the kalasam. Pour the water on yourself after you finish your bath, while saying a mantra of Sri Krishna. After pouring that water on yourself, don't pour any more regular water. The water from kalasam should be the last water you pour on yourself in the bath. In other words, you should absorb the energy in that water for a while.

It is possible to put a kalasam and use it everyday without changing water. One may change the water every weekend or on every Ashtami or Ekadasi day and take bath with the old water.

:: *Sarvam Sri Krishnarapanamastu* :: :: *Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih* ::

Appendix A: Super-short Homam (minimum mantras)

For those who are uncomfortable with Sanskrita and yet want to perform homam, the procedure given in this document may still be difficult. For such people, I can recommend a much shorter procedure. It is hoped that those who start with this super-short homam will eventually make an effort to switch to the main procedure given in this document, after they get some practice and become comfortable with mantras in Sanskrita.

Mantras offered to a deity in fire are powerful irrespective of the procedure used. Instead of not doing homam at all, it is better to do this super-short homam.

This appendix will describe a super-short procedure very briefly. If some details are unclear, please contextualize them by reading the rest of the document. The Sanskrita mantras are minimized in this super-short procedure.

Preliminary Procedure

Think in your mind of Mother Earth, Lord Ganesha, Sri Krishna, your parents, rishis of your lineage (if you know them), all rishis and all gods. You can use a language that you are comfortable with (*e.g.* English or Hindi or Russian) and say something in an intuitive way to remember all of them.

Take a tumbler or glass of water. Take three spoonfuls of water from the tumbler and drink them while saying: “This is for Keshava (keśava)”, “This is for Naaraayana (nārāyaṇa)” and “This is for Maadhava (mādhava)”.

With akshatas in hand, pray to Ganesha: “O Ganesha (gaṇeśa)! Please remove obstacles from my homam”. Do praanaayaama (see the section on it in the main document), possibly with the *Om* sound or a mantra given earlier.

Now take a vow: “I shall now perform a homam to the best of my ability, for the pleasure of Lord Krishna (kṛṣṇa).”

Leave the akshatas in front of the idol or homa kundam.

Early Offerings

Light a lamp. Put some akshatas in the water tumbler and say “vam (vam)” 11 times. Take the water with the spoon and sprinkle it on yourself, on the homa kundam, on the idol and on the food, fruits and flowers.

Homa kundam should be on your east and you should be facing east. Draw two red parallel east-west lines with kumkum (vermilion) connecting the middle of the western edge of homa kundam with your seat and place the container with melted ghee on those lines.

Take a small camphor piece, light it in the lamp and place the burning camphor piece in homa kundam while saying the following.

om bhūrbhuvassuvarom|

O Fire god, please co-operate with me and make my offerings reach gods in a state of purity.

Place dry coconut pieces or wood above it and make sure that they catch fire. Now offer five drops of ghee while saying the following:

om prajāpataye svāhā|
om indrāya svāhā|
om agnaye svāhā|
om somāya svāhā|

This is for forgiveness of my mistakes so far.

om bhūrbhuvassuvaḥ svāhā|

Quick Worship of Ganesha in Fire

Say “O Ganesha (gaṇeśa), please come into this fire”. Say the following while showing the fire with folded palms (as though you are telling someone “come here”):

āvāhito bhava| sthāpito bhava|

Put some akshatas in the fire and say “O Ganesha (gaṇeśa), please be pleased with these services from me”. Now repeat the following mantra of Ganesha 4 times with an offering of ghee or something else.

om gaṁ gaṇapataye namaḥ| svāhā|

Main Homam of Sri Krishna

Say “O Lord Krishna (kṛṣṇa), please come into this fire”. Say the following while showing the fire with folded palms (as though you are telling someone “come here”):

āvāhito bhavaḥ | sthāpito bhavaḥ |

Put some akshatas in the fire and say “O Lord Krishna (kṛṣṇa), please be pleased with these services from me”.

Now repeat the mantras of Krishna that you know 4 or 8 or 12 or 21 or 28 or 108 or 1008 times. Some mantras are suggested in the main document (see pages 21-22 before). At a minimum, do the following simple mantra as many times as you can.

om kṛṣṇāya namaḥ | svāhā |

Each time you say this, offer ghee or akshatas or sesame seeds or some other materials described earlier in this document in the fire. If you do the above mantra many times and not do any other mantras, it is acceptable.

At the end of the offerings, take some food you cooked (or fruit), show it to the fire and say “O Lord Krishna (kṛṣṇa), please accept this” and throw a small bit into fire. Then stand up and go around the homa kundam once or 3 times. If someone looks at you from the roof or from the sky, it should look like you are going around the homa kundam in clockwise direction. At the end, you can bow in front of the fire. Finally sit down in front of the fire in your original place.

Final Offerings

Say the following lines and offer a drop of ghee in the fire after each line:

om bhūḥ svāhā |
om bhuvaḥ svāhā |
om suvaḥ svāhā |
om bhūrbhuvassuvaḥ svāhā |
om viṣṇave svāhā |
om rudrāya svāhā |

At the end, sprinkle a little water on your right hand.

If it is possible, now offer six chunks of cooked white rice or fruit slices in the six places shown in Figure 3, while saying “these are for the associates of Lord Krishna (kṛṣṇa)”. Otherwise, you may skip this step.

Poornaahuti

While saying “Om”, pour a stream of ghee from the spoon into the fire. When the fire becomes big, you can offer poornaahuti.

Please read the section on poornaahuti in the main document for the description of materials needed, meaning of poornaahuti and the spirit to be followed. Instead of the mantras in the main document, just say the following:

om klīm kṛṣṇāya pūrṇāhutim samarpayāmi

Then drop the full coconut or half coconut or coconut piece in fire. Offer one more drop of ghee while saying:

om agnaye saptavate svāhā

Now, meditate with any mantra you like for 5-10 minutes as the poornaahuti burns. For some useful tips, please refer to the main document.

At the end of the meditation, show your heart with your hands and say “O Ganesha (gaṇeśa) and O Lord Krishna (kṛṣṇa), please come back into my heart”. Also, thank the fire god mentally for his co-operation in the ritual. Then say:

sarvam śrī kṛṣṇārpaṇamastu | om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ |

If you minimize the entire procedure and spend maximum time chanting a mantra of Lord Krishna with offerings into fire and then meditating as the poornaahuti burns, you will get the most out of your homam and not lose much! After some practice, you can compare this super-short procedure with the procedure given in the main document and keep adding mantras from the main procedure and eventually switch to the main procedure. But even this super-short procedure, when performed sincerely, can give good results.

Appendix B: Shodasopachaara Pooja

[If you want to perform a shodasopachaara pooja (a worship consisting of 16 services) to Sri Krishna who is in fire and the idol, instead of the panchopachaara pooja mentioned in this document, please use the procedure in this appendix instead. This will take more time.]

Say the line below and think in the mind that you are offering a nice seat to Sri Krishna to sit on. While imagining that, just offer a few akshatas to the idol and the fire.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya namaḥ | āsanam samarpayāmi

Now, say the line below imagine that you are washing his feet. While imagining that, show a little water with the spoon to the fire and leave the water in a small empty bowl (we will call it “the deposit bowl” from now onwards).

om klīm kṛṣṇāya pādayoḥ pādyam samarpayāmi|

Say the line below, imagine that you are washing the hands of Sri Krishna , show a little water in the spoon to the fire and leave it in the deposit bowl.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya hastayoḥ arghyam samarpayāmi|

Say the line below, imagine that you are offering drinking water to Sri Krishna ’s mouth, show a little water in the spoon to the fire and leave it in the deposit bowl.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya mukhe śuddhācamanīyam samarpayāmi|

Say the first sentence below, imagine that you are giving a bath to Sri Krishna , show a little water in the spoon to the fire and leave it in the deposit bowl. Say the second sentence below, imagine that you are giving drinking water to Sri Krishna ’s mouth after bath, show a little water in the spoon to the fire and leave it in the deposit bowl.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya snapayāmi| snānānantaram ācamanīyam samarpayāmi|

Say the line below, imagine that you are offering a pair of nice clothes (one in the top and one in the bottom, *i.e.* like a shirt and a pant) and offer a few akshatas to the idol and the fire.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya vastrāṇi dhārayāmi|

Say the line below, imagine that you are offering a yajnopaveetam (sacred thread) and offer a few akshatas to the idol and the fire.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya yajñopavitam samarpayāmi|

Say the line below, imagine that you are offering nice jewelry and offer a few akshatas to the idol and the fire.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya ābharaṇāni samarpayāmi|

Say the line below and offer a little bit of sandalwood paste, turmeric powder, kumkum powder and akshatas to the idol and the fire. If you don’t have all these, just sprinkle a few akshatas on the idol and the fire.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya gandhān dhārayāmi | haridrā kuṅkumaṁ samarpayāmi | akṣatān
samarpayāmi |

Keep sprinkling a few flowers or flower petals or akshatas on the idol and the fire while reading the following 16 names of Sri Krishna . Make sure you put very little amount of materials in the fire, so that you don't extinguish it accidentally. Offer most things to the idol instead. Just offer a token amount in the fire.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya puṣpaiḥ pūjayāmi |

Say the following line and show the incense stick lighted before to the fire and the idol.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya dhūpam āghrāpayāmi |

Say the following line and show the lamp lighted before to the fire and the idol. Then show a little water in the spoon to the fire and idol and leave it in the deposit bowl.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya dīpam darśayāmi | ācamanīyaṁ samarpayāmi |

Say the first sentence below, show one of the two food items you prepared (or fruits) to god and imagine that he tasted it. If you know the standard procedure of offering *naivedyam* with the Gayatri mantra, you can do it. Else, don't worry and just say the line below. When saying the second line, imagine that you are offering a nice *taamboolam* (*paan*) to Sri Krishna and offer some akshatas in their place to the idol and the fire.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya naivedyaṁ samarpayāmi | tāmbūlaṁ samarpayāmi |

Place a little camphor on a camphor container or a plate, light it and make a clockwise vertical circle in the air with the plate in front of the fire. Say the line below while you do it.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya karpūranīrājanam samarpayāmi |

Take a small flower (or some akshatas) in your right hand, say the following and offer the flower to the idol (and perhaps a couple of petals into the fire). If you know "Narayana Sooktam" and/or Mantrapushpam (and if you have time), read them first and then say the line below. Otherwise, just this line will do. Imagine that you are offering a flower that captures the essence of all mantras.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya mantrapuṣpaṁ samarpayāmi |

Say the following and bow before Sri Krishna mentally. Of course, you can also get up, go around the homa kundam once or thrice and bow down (or kneel down or lie down) in front of

the fire, if you are not in a hurry. If someone looks at you from the roof or sky, it should look like you are going around the fire in clockwise directions.

om klīm kṛṣṇāya pradakṣiṇa namaskārān samarpayāmi

While you do all this, make sure that the fire gets going. Keep placing more dry coconut pieces if necessary to keep the fire going. It may be tricky the first few times, but you will get used to it. When necessary, you can sprinkle a little camphor powder in the fire to make it bigger.

Appendix C: Practical Tips and Hints

Here are some hints related to practical aspects of homam:

- (1) In the beginning, there may be problems with maintaining the fire. New dry coconut pieces (or wood pieces) have to be put in the fire while old pieces are still burning, in order to keep the fire going. One's ability to estimate how long a dry coconut piece can sustain fire will improve with time.
- (2) If the fire completely goes away, sprinkling some camphor powder on the hot pieces can bring the fire back. That fire can be sustained by placing new pieces.
- (3) If only a small amount of akshatas are offered during pooja (one or two akshatas each time) and placed on a coconut piece, they will eventually burn.
- (4) When offering a flower, if only a petal is placed on a coconut piece and the rest of the flower is placed near the idol, it has a better chance of burning fully in the fire without creating problems to the fire. Of course, in a homam performed with a big fire, full flowers burn easily.
- (5) If small amounts are offered, it works better (when the fire is also small).
- (6) If merely a drop of ghee is offered each time, less smoke is generated.
- (7) Wood generates smoke. But dry coconut generates very little smoke. It generates smokes mainly at the end when the fire goes away. If the homa kundam is close to a window and the window is opened at the end, that may be sufficient to drive the little smoke out.
- (8) Apart from mantras of Sri Krishna , mantras of other deities can be offered in the fire while imagining them to be different manifestations of Sri Krishna .
- (9) It is a very good idea to keep the body as still as possible, with minimal movement of only those body parts that must move (*e.g.* arm and mouth). It will maximize the positive spiritual benefit from homam.
- (10) It is a good idea to keep atleast two coconut pieces burning all the time. Even if the fire in one becomes weak, the other piece can help re-ignite it.

(11) If one puts a lot of oil or ghee in a pan and heats it, it generates smoke as the ghee burns. If one puts too little oil in a pan and tries to fry vegetables, they burn and generate smoke. If one puts the right balance of oil and vegetables, they get cooked properly and there is no smoke. Similarly, if one puts the right balance of ghee and solid materials, they burn without smoke. There will be some smoke only at the end, when the fire goes off. Wood, on the other hand, is different from dry coconut and generates more smoke.