

## Meal Offering Ceremony

First, the sponsor lights the candles (2) and incense (3 sticks) and bows three times to the Buddha image. Then he/she turns to face the monks, bows three times, and requests the precepts as follows:

**T H E R E Q U E S T :** Mayam̐ bhante ti-saraṇena saha pañca silāni yācāma.

*Venerable Sir, we request the Three Refuges & the Five Precepts*

**Dutiyam-pi mayam̐ bhante...**

*Venerable Sir, a second time...*

**Tatīyam-pi mayam̐ bhante...**

*Venerable Sir, a third time...*

The monk then recites the following passage three times, after which the lay people repeat it three times:

**Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa.**

*Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One.*

**( T H R E E T I M E S )**

The monk then recites the following passages line by line, with the lay people reciting line by line after him.

**Buddham̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*I go to the Buddha for refuge.*

**Dhammam̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*I go to the Dhamma for refuge.*

**Saṅgham̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*I go to the Saṅgha for refuge.*

**Dutiyam-pi buddham̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*A second time, I go to the Buddha for refuge.*

**Dutiyam-pi dhammam̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*A second time, I go to the Dhamma for refuge.*

**Dutiyam-pi saṅgham̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*A second time, I go to the Saṅgha for refuge.*

**Tatiyam-pi buddham̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*A third time, I go to the Buddha for refuge.*

**Tatiyam-pi dhammam̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*A third time, I go to the Dhamma for refuge.*

**Tatiyam-pi saṅgham̐ saraṇam̐ gacchāmi.**

*A third time, I go to the Saṅgha for refuge.*

The monk then says: **Ti-saraṇa-gamanam̐ niṭṭhitam̐.**

*This ends the going for refuge.*

The lay people respond: **Āma, bhante.**

*Yes, Venerable Sir.*

The monk then recites the precepts line by line, with the lay people reciting them line by line after him.

**Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhā-padam̐ samādiyāmi.**

*I undertake the training rule to refrain from taking life.*

**Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhā-padam̐ samādiyāmi.**

*I undertake the training rule to refrain from stealing.*

**Kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī sikkhā-padam̐ samādiyāmi.**

*I undertake the training rule to refrain from sexual misconduct.*

**Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhā-padam̐ samādiyāmi.**

*I undertake the training rule to refrain from telling lies.*

**Surā-meraya-majja-pamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhā-padam̐ samādiyāmi.**

*I undertake the training rule to refrain from intoxicating liquors & drugs that lead to heedlessness.*

The monk then concludes with the following:

**Imāni pañca sikkhā-padāni:**

*These are the five training rules.*

**Sīlena sugatim yanti.**

*Through virtue they go to a good destination.*

**Sīlena bhoga-sampadā.**

*Through virtue is wealth attained.*

**Sīlena nibbutim yanti.**

*Through virtue they go to Unbinding.*

**Tasmā silam visodhaye.**

*Therefore we should purify our virtue.*

The lay people respond: **Sādhu, bhante.**

*Very good, Venerable Sir.*

( B O W   T H R E E   T I M E S )

Then the sponsor requests the blessings with the following chant:

Vipatti-paṭibāhāya	sabba-sampatti-siddhiyā,
Sabba-dukkha-vināsāya	parittam brūtha maṅgalam.
Vipatti-paṭibāhāya	sabba-sampatti-siddhiyā,
Sabba-bhaya-vināsāya	parittam brūtha maṅgalam.
Vipatti-paṭibāhāya	sabba-sampatti-siddhiyā,
Sabba-roga-vināsāya	parittam brūtha maṅgalam.

*For warding off misfortune, for the achievement of all good fortune,  
for the dispelling of all pain, may you chant a blessing & protection.*

*For warding off misfortune, for the achievement of all good fortune,  
for the dispelling of all danger, may you chant a blessing & protection.*

*For warding off misfortune, for the achievement of all good fortune,  
for the dispelling of all illness, may you chant a blessing & protection.*

Then one of the monks will chant the Invitation to the Devas, after which the monks will begin chanting the blessings. When they get to the chant beginning with “asevanā ca bālānam”, the sponsor should light the candle suspended over the bowl of blessing water, then raise his/her hands in añjali, and listen to the chanting, or meditate while the monks are chanting.

After the monks finish chanting, the monks will line up their bowls and the sponsor and all of the guests can offer rice into each bowl. Then the bowls should be handed back to the monks. The rest of the dishes can then be offered. When the monks are finished preparing their meal, the lay people should take the food back and eat in another location.

Once the monks have finished eating, if the sponsor has any other offerings, they may be offered at that time. Then the monks will chant the anumodanā (blessing rejoicing in merit). If any of the lay people want to pour water as the monks are chanting the anumodanā, they should start when the head monk begins with “Yathā ...” When the second monk responds with “Sabbitiyo ...,” they should finish pouring the water, raise their hands in añjali, and listen to the chanting.

(When dedicating merit to the deceased, it is traditional in Thailand to pour water from a small vessel into a bowl, which symbolizes the merit being dedicated, in line with the verse the monk is chanting, which translates, “Just as rivers full of water / fill the ocean full / even so does that here given / benefit the dead (the hungry ghosts). / May whatever you wish or want quickly come to be / may all your aspirations be fulfilled / as the moon on the fifteenth (full moon) day / or as a radiant, bright gem.” Focusing on the stream of water is also a way of calming and centering the mind.)

If the sponsor has arranged with the head monk to sprinkle blessing water in the house or make a protective mark, this is the time for it to be done. Then take the monks back to the monastery.

That concludes the ceremony.