

Dharma/Buddhist Name (Homyō)- is made up of two Chinese characters preceded by the character “Shaku”. It is the abbreviation of “Shakyamuni” who is a founder of Buddhism, thus means “a disciple of the Buddha” who follows the Buddha’s teachings as a true guide in a life. A Name is conferred on a person while living to express the intention to hear and live the teachings of Buddhism. However, missing the opportunity, the Name can be conferred after a person’s death. By presenting a Name, we deeply show our respect to your loved one who teaches us the truth of life as a disciple of Buddha.

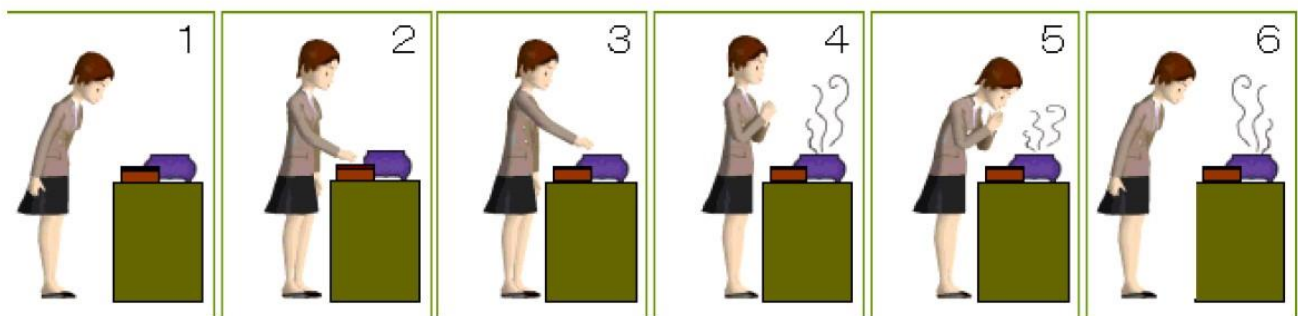
Gasshō – means to put hands together to show our respect. It signifies the oneness of Amida Buddha and human beings.

Sutra – means a teaching of the Buddha who reveals the truth of life. Chanting a sutra is to praise the virtue of Amida Buddha who embraces and saves our loved ones and all of us.

Offering of Incense (Oshōkō) – means to show our respect to Amida Buddha who embraces your loved one warmly and gently with unconditional compassion. It’s said burning incense is symbolic of the transiency of life and the remaining fragrance we savor in the room is a symbol of Amida Buddha’s great compassion pervading our lives.

How to offer incense in Jodo Shinshu Tradition

1. Walk up to the incense table, stop 2-3 steps before the table, and bow slightly.
- 2 & 3 Step up to the incense burner and put a pinch of incense into the burner. No need to place it toward the forehead.
4. Put your hands together in *gassho* and recite Buddha’s Name, *Namo Amida Butsu* a few times.
5. Bow deeply while placing hands together.
6. Step back, and bow slightly again. Return to your seat.



Excerpt from “Kawakubo Dogyo no Heya”

White Ashes 2

Written by Master Rennyō (1415-1499), the 8th Spiritual Leader of Hongwanji tradition

In silently contemplating the transient nature of human existence, nothing in our world is more fragile and fleeting than our life. Thus, we hear of no one sustaining a human form for a thousand years. Life swiftly passes and who among us can maintain our human form for even a hundred years?

Whether I go before others, or others go before me; whether it be today, or it be tomorrow, who is to know? Those who leave before us are as countless as the drops of dew. Though in the morning we may have radiant health, in the evening we may return to ashes. When the winds of impermanence blow, our eyes are closed forever; and when the last breath leaves us, our face loses its color.

Though loved ones gather and lament, everything is to no avail. The body is then sent into an open field and vanishes from this world with the smoke of cremation, leaving only white ashes. There is nothing more real than this truth of life. The fragile nature of human existence underlies both the young and old, and therefore we must, one and all, turn to the teachings of the Buddha and awaken to the ultimate source of life.

By so understanding the meaning of death, we shall come to fully appreciate the meaning of this life which is unrepeatable and thus to be treasured above all else. By virtue of true compassion, let us realize the irreplaceable value of human life and let us together live the nembutsu in our hearts. Humbly and respectfully.

Mihotoke Ni Idakarete (In Amida's Embrace)

1. Mi ho to ke ni, i da ka re te, ki mi yu ki nu ni shi no ki shi
Na tsu ka shi ki, o mo ka ge mo, ki e ha te shi, ka na shi sa yo

2. Mi ho to ke ni, i da ka re te, ki mi yu ki un, ji hi no ku ni
Mi su ku i wo, mi ni ka ke te, shi me shi ma su, ka shi ko sa yo

3. Mi ho to ke ni, i da ka re te, Ki mi yu ki nu, ha na no sa to
Tsu ki se za ru, ta no shi mi ni, E mi ta mō u re shi sa yo

4. Mi ho to ke ni, i da ka re te, ki mi yu ki un, ta ma no i e
U tsu ku shi ki, mi ho to ke to, na ri ma shi shi, to to sa yo

Translation

1. In Amida's embrace, dear beloved one, you have gone beyond to the Western Shore. Fading memories of your image fond. Leave but emptiness: how we mourn your loss!

2. In Amida's embrace, dear beloved one, you have gone beyond to the Land of Peace. You have shown to all in the highest form. 'Mida's Saving Vow: We owe gratitude

3. In Amida's embrace, dear beloved one, you have gone beyond to the Floral Realm. Oh! Your countenance beams with happiness. Inexhaustible: we rejoice for you!

4. In Amida's embrace, dear beloved one, you have gone beyond to the 'Splendent Home. You've become at one with Amida's Light. In the Buddhahood: we do you revere.

Nembutsu

A song to express our entrusting heart for the Buddha of Compassion and Wisdom, Namo Amida Butsu who is embracing our departed loved ones and all of us, warmly and gently.

Nembutsu

Osamu Shimizu

Na - mo A - mi___ da, Na - mo A -
Mi ___ da, Na - mo A - mi___ da Bu - tsu,
Na - mo A - mi___ da Bu - tsu, Na - mo A -
mi___ da, Na - mo A - mi___ da Bu - tsu.