

❖ CEREMONY OF CONSECRATING ANIMALS



Mongolians love their animals and look after them. Because of this, they have a custom and tradition to make animals sacred and entrust the stars, fire, Buddha and stone cairns to protect them. Every family is eager to increase their domestic animals and abide by the religious services to obtain good fortune. This service is performed mostly during autumn. Conducted by the monks this service is received by almost all families every autumn. The animals (horses, sheep, camels, goats or cows) are consecrated or re-consecrated during this service. The neck of each animal is tied with the blessed ribbon. Before the ceremony is held, all the livestock animals are brought to the corral. The head of family brings the animal to be blessed near the flames of a fire and announces the animal's colour, pedigree, offspring and yields, and the benefits of it to the owner. He then entrusts the consecrating of this animal and its spirit to the deity of the fire. The owner expresses his best wishes, anoints the animal with milk, and returns it to its companions. During the ceremony, the animal owner proffers pieces of breast and chin bone as an offering to a fire. The right foreleg with a shank is placed before the altar. The bones of the ankle and hock are burnt. The ashes of burnt bones are then put into the sack for the summoning prosperity next morning. It is customary. The blessed animals are forbidden to be ridden, beat, cursed, stabbed, or sold.

