

11

Now it's Goddess Lakshmi's turn. We place her on the *Thali*, wash her and "dress" her and place some *haldi* and *kumkum* on her.



12

We invoke Goddess Lakshmi with a *mantra* and offer her some flowers, *akshat* and food (*prasad*).

Om Shri Lakshmi Devayay Namaha (Salutations to Sri Lakshmi)
&
*Om Sarva Lokasya Jananim Sula Hastam Trilo Chanamsarvade
Vama Yimi Sam, Devi Mava Haya My Aham Devim Avaha Yami Svaha.*

(I invoke the Mother of the 3 worlds, the 3-eyed one with the spear in her hand, in whom all the gods reside. I invoke the Goddess.)

13

One of the last things we do is the *Aarti*. We light the camphor and circle it around the puja area. We ring the bell to announce to everyone that Ganesha and Lakshmi are ready to shed their light on us. We offer the *Aarti* to everyone at the puja. They place their hand over the flame (not too close!) and then touch their eyes - as if to say, "Thank you for shedding your light upon me!" We can sing songs and play music now.



14

Finally, we offer everybody a spoonful of water and *prasad* - a gift from Ganesha and Lakshmi - their blessings.



15

Now we light *diyas* all over the house. We're ready for the Diwali celebrations!

