

**Honoring Ancestors' Ceremony on Saturday 25 January 2020 at 11:30 hrs at
Chung Shan Hall, Port Louis**

Hon. Avinash Teeluck, Minister of Arts and Cultural Heritage

Your Lordship the Mayor of Port Louis

Mrs. Kathleen Li, Chairperson of Spring Festival Celebration Association

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning.

1. I am very much pleased to have been invited by the Spring Festival Celebration Association to this very symbolic ceremony for honouring your ancestors.
2. We all have ancestors, both of blood and of spirit, and each of our lives rests firmly on the foundation of their sacrifice. They are as near to us as our breath, and when related with in conscious ways, they can be a tremendous source of healing, guidance, and companionship.
3. Unfortunately, in today's world, we live such busy lives that it takes an event like this ceremony to make us remember our ancestors and reflect on whether we are living in ways that would make them happy.

4. Ancestral remembrance is an extremely important part of Chinese traditions, and filial piety is a central value in traditional Chinese culture. Its importance went far beyond that of the biblical commandment “*honour thy mother and thy father*”. Filial piety was and still is a value based on strict principles of hierarchy, obligation and obedience.
5. Without doubt, the pillar of the Chinese family structure is the concept of filial piety. You have always been interested in your past -- worship of ancestors is worship your origins.
6. The goal of this ceremony is to promote filial piety, cherish the memory of your ancestors and to continue the incredible tradition and cultural heritage left behind by the ancient saints and sages. Confucius said, "**Filial piety is the root of all virtues.**"
7. Ancestor worshipping is not asking for favours, but to fulfil one's filial duties. The act is a way to respect and honour our ancestors as well as possibly seeking the ancestors' wisdom, guidance or assistance.
8. One has to pay respect and homage to the ancestors, honour their deeds and memories since they are the ones having brought the descendants into the world, nourished them and having prepared the conditions under which the descendants grew up.

9. To-day is a reminder for you, my Chinese fellow countrymen, of your debt of gratitude to your ancestors. This ceremony reminds you that you are the beneficiaries of the good deeds of your ancestors and you should continue their tasks and pass it along to your future generations.

10. Before concluding, let me seize this opportunity to wish you and your family a happy, healthy and prosperous Chinese New Year of the Rat. Let us embrace the New Year with more positive hopes, more colorful joys and a more amazing future.

KUNG CHEE FAT CHOY