Does your home have a shrine room?
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TRADITION

Does your home have a shrine room?

Krishan Dutt, London

In a quiet tree-lined street in the West London suburb of Hounslow, as heavy vehicular traffic thunders all through the day on the nearby six-lane Great West Road motorway, melodious bhajanas instantly create an aura of tranquillity in the home of Mohini and Prem Sethi. What is unique about "Prem Niwas," as the Sethis' have named their three-bedroom house, is that they set up an exclusive prayer room, complete with beautiful idols of Radha and Krishna, lit up with colorful spotlights and attired in garments of yellow, green and crimson.

"Howsoever tired or stressed one may be at the end of a hard day, when we sit and meditate and sing sacred songs, we are instantly refreshed," said Mohini.

Prem related, "In 1947--I was a school kid then--when my parents fled newly-created Pakistan because of communal riots and killings in Bannu and came over to newly-independent India, we lost all material possessions. It

was our strong faith in Hindu dharma that saw us through those very turbulent times."

When Mohini came to Britain with Prem and their two infant children, the first thing they did when they acquired their own house was to create a room exclusively for worship. The dedicated shrine room is a strong tradition but unfortunately less followed today, despite its myriad benefits as demonstrated by the Sethis. More and more should take up their example.