

## Special Occasion Rituals

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***Question #1: Describe how it is different to write and perform a special occasion ritual instead of a High Day ritual. (minimum 100 words)***

In a High Day ritual, we follow a clear and predetermined order of ritual steps, make sacrifices and ask for blessings in return. These rites also celebrate seasonal changes and times of year, in various hearth cultures, that recur year after year. Many of our usual ritual modules can be used with some modification time after time.

In a special occasion ritual, however, we are celebrating a specific occasion or passage concerning specific people. And for these people, these occasions, etc., may not occur again. There is no requirement to follow the Order of Ritual, make sacrifices and ask for blessings, though all of these may be included. And the purpose of such rites is not general blessings, but rather specific blessings or transformations. If following the COoR, such a rite might greatly emphasize the 'Workings' step over all others, as this could be the core of the ritual.

***Question #2: Define "rite of passage" in your own words. (no minimum word count)***

A 'rite' is a ritual or unified series of intentional actions used to celebrate something or mark a transition. In this context, a 'passage' refers to the various stages in our lives that we all go through, and especially the transitions between them. So a rite of passage would be a ritual designed and executed to aid someone to traverse the dangerous liminal boundaries between different stages in life. Unlike other rites, which may carry off an individual emotionally and then allow them to return to who they were, a rite of passage, if done well, carries the individual away in such a way that return to their former state is impossible (Grimes, *Deeply Into the Bone*, 6-7).

There are lots of stages that we all go through, but, unfortunately, most of them go unmarked in the modern world. We are born, we reach puberty, we reach adulthood (whatever that is), we pair off or marry, we reach old age (marked by menopause in women but nothing concrete in men, other than infirmity) and we die. But of these, the most common rites of passage that are marked in our culture include marriage and death (funerals or Memorial Services). There are some 'coming of age' rites in the current major religions, such as Confirmation for some Christians and Bar Mitzvah for Jewish boys (Bat Mitzvah for the girls), but they are not universal. And then there are also lots of other transitions, like having an abortion, going off to college, going off to war, divorce, job changes, etc., that are barely marked. Ronald Grimes believes that unmarked passages act like sinkholes, draining psychic energy, causing social confusion and twisting the course of that person's life from them on (Grimes, *Deeply Into the Bone*, 6).

Rites of Passage tend to be broken up into three distinct stages: separation from the community, a transition into a particularly formative time and space, followed by re-integration back into the community (Grimes, *Deeply Into the Bone*, 6). A modern example of this is that just before a standard wedding in our culture, the bride and groom are not allowed to see each other. The groom is taken on his 'stag' night with the guys (a rite of passage of its own) where he is expected to get very drunk. Sometimes the women do the same for the bride. The couple finally meet up at the altar, where the rite of union takes place, and after kissing each other, are, in effect, re-introduced to the community under a new designation, 'man and wife'.

***Question #3: Describe how the following elements of the Core Order of Ritual can be used in a special occasion ritual in a way that takes into consideration religiously diverse***

***audiences that may not be accepting of ADF traditions and practices (minimum 50 words per element)***

**a) Calling for the Blessings and Hallowing the Waters**

The image of the 'cup' holding something sacred is a common one in our culture, thanks to the Christian sacrament of communion. In ADF, we use the cup to hold the blessings of the Kindreds, but in our rites, we literally 'call' for them to be placed in the liquid of the cup, and then hallow the cup (which is the actual process of getting those blessing in there, as I see it).

For a wedding, words involving the blessings of 'unity' or 'growth' or 'coming together' could be used. I want to emphasize here, however, that the priest doing the ceremony should also be doing the magic of the Blessing Cup as usual, even if not out loud. For funerals, the words could convey the ideas of 'they may be gone but they live on in us' or 'we all have come together here to celebrate a life well lived,' 'let us drink to dear Uncle Bob', etc.

An example of a module might be:

Priest holds the cup up in front of the congregation and says:

(Wedding)

"As we are celebrating the union of these two people, let us call upon the Divine and remember all the blessings that we wish for (state their names here) in their new life, and let them drink of love and blessings.

May love fill their hearts, may the Divine guide their souls, and may they thrive in their daily lives."

(Funeral)

"We call upon the Divine to bless dear Uncle Bob and help him on his way. May he find peace, may we find solace, and may we remember him always.

Let us now share this drink in his honor, and remember that he will live on within our hearts."

**b) Honoring the Earth Mother**

Thanks to TV ("It's not nice to fool Mother Nature") and the photos of the earth taken in outer space back in the 1970's, the concept of the earth as something worthy of reverence has taken hold in the popular mind. People refer to Mother Earth and, while they may not necessarily see Her as divine, they do think of Her as a totality. The popularization of the Gaia Principle has also helped with this.

An example of a module might be:

Priest says:

"Let us take a moment to reflect on this wonderful world on which we live. All life is grateful for the abundance we find here. Let us keep the earth alive in our hearts, that we may strive to protect and keep Her."

**c) Inviting the Three Kindreds**

This gets more difficult to slip in without offending Monotheists. Instead, we need to refer to them in ways that people already understand, and which are not so 'in your face' as the callings we usually make.

Examples of Kindred Callings might be:

## **Ancestors**

"We are who we are through the love and efforts of our families through all the generations. We remember them and give thanks for that love."

## **Nature Spirits**

"We see Nature all around us. We find joy and delight in each butterfly, warm breeze and growing thing. And we see our true place in the great scheme of things."

## **Shining Ones**

"We thrive in the divine spark that lives in us all. We feel peace in the knowledge that we can know that which is Greater Than We. And our hearts swell with joy in the fullness of Love."

### **d) Recreating the Cosmos**

I always like to think of the individual as their own *axis mundi*, as a vessel of ordered potential, and that we only need to be reminded of that in order to feel the cosmic connection.

An example of Re-creating the Cosmos might be:

"As above, so below – as below, so above. When we think of our Ancestors, we remember the potential with which we were born. When we contemplate Heaven, we know that we may shape our lives. And when we look at the world around us, we see who we are now, and find joy in the present.

For we live at the center of our lives."

### **e) Opening/Closing the Gates**

The act of opening and closing the Gates is one of establishing communication between this world and the others. Perhaps by merely being actively aware of this connection we may open these gates.

#### **Opening the Gates**

"Remember the Loved Ones that you have lost. Let their voices speak in your hearts, for they are with you always."

"Feel the spark of divine love as it sings, filling you with wonder and knowing, for we are always welcome in the Halls of Joy."

"Here as we are, in the midst of divinity, resting in the love of our families, we are truly whole."

#### **Closing the Gates**

Now, as this rite/wedding/funeral/etc. is ending, we must return to our daily lives. But while we may not feel the spark of divine love, it is always there. And while we may not recall the wisdom and support of our lost family, know that they are never far away, dwelling in our hearts. We live in bountiful nature, even if we forget to look.

So go back into the world knowing that we are all truly blessed."

**Question #4: Write a full ritual for one of the following rites of passage (or other with written approval from the CC Preceptor):**

I have written a marriage rite in the Welsh Hearth Culture that I have also adapted for Norse.

## **A Welsh Handfasting Rite**

*The Priest rings a bell three times three.*

*The Priest says:*

**Earth Mother Dôn, You uphold us all in our lives. Without You we could not live.**

*All kiss the Earth. Priest offers corn meal and oat meal to the ground, saying:*

**Earth Mother, accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest faces the couple and says:*

**Pwyll, Lord of Annwfn, said, "If I could choose from all the women and maidens in the world, 'tis you I would choose."**

**And Rhiannon responded, "If that is what you want, set a date with me before I am joined to another man."**

**The Hall was then prepared for Pwyll and his host, and the host of the court as well. They ate and reveled, and it came time to go to sleep. Pwyll and Rhiannon went to the chamber and spent the night in pleasure and contentment.**

**Children of the Earth, we are here in the sight of the Gods, the Nature Spirits and the Ancestors to see two lives brought together in love and happiness.**

\_\_\_\_\_ *Name of Bride* \_\_\_\_\_, please state your intent to all present.

*The Bride turns and faces the People and says:*

**Today is the appointed day. I declare to all present, Human and Divine, that I wish to join my hand to \_\_\_\_\_ *Name of Groom* \_\_\_\_\_.**

*The Priest says:*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Name of Groom* \_\_\_\_\_, please state your intent to all present.

*The Groom turns and faces the People and says:*

**Today is the appointed day. I declare to all present, Human and Divine, that I wish to join my hand to \_\_\_\_\_ *Name of Bride* \_\_\_\_\_.**

*The Priest holds up the chalice of mead and says:*

**Share this cup as you will share your love and concern, holding faith in one another.**

*The Couple share the cup, drinking of the mead. The Priest returns the cup to the altar.*

*The Priest holds up the loaf of bread and says:*

**Share this bread as you will share your worldly goods and debts, holding faith in one another.**

*The Priest breaks the loaf and gives half each to the bride and groom. They eat of the bread and return the remaining bread to the altar.*

*The Priest says:*

**\_\_\_\_Name of Bride\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_Name of Groom\_\_\_\_, you have shared of your love and of your goods.**

**What oaths do you make to one another?**

*The Bride says:*

**Dearest Name, in the names of the Three Kindreds, I promise that I shall hold faith with you. I also promise....**

*Here the Bride swears her oath, ending with:*

**May the earth open beneath me, may the sea rise up against me and may the sky fall upon me should I forswear my oaths.**

*The Groom says:*

**Dearest Name, by the Might of the Water and the Light of the Fire, I promise that I shall hold faith with you. I also promise....**

*Here the Groom swears his oath, ending with:*

**May the earth open beneath me, may the sea rise up against me and may the sky fall upon me should I forswear my oaths.**

*The Priest says:*

**Please hold hands, right on right and left on left.**

*The Couple cross their wrists and hold hands, right hand to right hand, left hand to left hand.*

*The Priest takes the silken cord and loosely binds their wrists together and says:*

**What gifts do you bring one another?**

*The bride and groom exchange gifts or rings, saying appropriate words to one another.*

*When this is done, the Priest lifts a goblet and says:*

**Does anyone here wish to toast the bride and groom?**

*The Priest holds out a cup of ale or mead. The People come forth singly to make a toast. In small groups, everyone may be invited. In large groups, the persons making the toasts shall be chosen in advance by the Couple.*

*When all toasts are done, the Priest says:*

**May love guide your hearts. May the Kindreds guide your souls, and may your joy be a light in the world, growing in the Eternal Present.**

*(To the couple)* **Now show all attending, Human and Divine, the love you have for each other.**

*The Couple kisses. The Priest unbinds the cord and says:*

**Children of the Earth, these two have joined their hands and hearts as one in the presence of the Shining Ones, the Spirits of this Land, their Ancestors, and in the presence of their People.**

**Oh mighty Gods of the House of Dôn, of the House of Llyr and the House of Pwyll! Look down upon these your children and hold faith with them, blessing them with all the joys of love, passion, and understanding and with a long and fertile life in hearth and home. May their Ancestors uphold them and bless them with wisdom, and may the Tylwyth Teg and all the Spirits of the Land aid them in their home and hearth.**

**Earth Mother Dôn, may their hearth burn brightly upon Your bosom, filling their home with Your love. And for upholding their world and ours, we give You thanks.**

*(If appropriate, the Gods or other spirits invoked by the wedded couple may also be included in this prayer.)*

**Let us give our blessings by voicing our joy and our praise!**

**All hail Name and Name ! Joy and Long Life!**

*The People say:*

**Joy and Long Life! Hurrah!**

**Now go out into the world, knowing that the love and support of the People and of the Kindreds goes out there with you.**

*The Priest rings the bell three times three.*

**Question #5: Write three full rituals, one for three of the following options (or other with written approval of the CC Preceptor):**

**a) Giving a child a driver's license**

### **A Rite of Responsibility in the World**

*This rite is for young people under the age of 18 who are getting their drivers license for the first time (the Teen Driver) and is written for the Irish Gaelic hearth culture.*

*The ritual is to be performed in three parts. The first part occurs upon the occasion of a child getting their Driver's Learners Permit, the second part is performed the night before the drivers test is to be taken, and the third part occurs when s/he has passed the final drivers' test.*

*The first part is led by the Head of the Household (or that person in the household who normally leads the domestic practice as long as it is not the Teen Driver), but the second and third parts are performed or led by the new Teen Driver.*

#### **Part 1 - BEGINNINGS**

*Before the rite, the Teen Driver will have completed 20 hours of community service (this can include taking care of neighbors who cannot take care of themselves, such as mowing the lawn of an elderly couple, etc., or service to Grove members in need, etc.), proving his or her worth to the community.*

*The Head of the Family (Head) brings the Teen Driver in front of the household altar in the presence of the family.*

*Head offers grain to the Earth Mother, saying:*

**Great Lady! We remember and worship You at this time, for You make all life possible.**

*Head puts silver into the Well saying:*

**Sacred Well, we connect you to the Wells of all the world, and to the homes of our Holy Dead.**

*Head lights a candle and lights incense from the candle flame, saying:*

**Sacred Fire, we connect you to the Fires of the Sky, and to the powers of the Gods.**

*Head censes and asperses the World Tree, saying:*

**Sacred Tree, send your roots into the Underworld, spread your branches into the Heavens, be the pathway to the Otherworlds, that our voices may go to the Kindreds!**

*Head pours oil into the Offering Bowl, saying:*

**Manannan mac Lir! Come and aid us here! Open the ways between the Worlds, free our voices that we may be heard, carry our words to the Kindreds!**

**Osclaítear na geataí! Let the Gates be open!**

**Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!**

*Head lights more incense, calling on the Patron of the household, saying:*

**(Name of Patron), You see before You our beloved son (daughter), (name), whom You know well. S/he has made sacrifice to You often, in love and devotion. But today we must ask for something in return.**

**Hear his/her words, Great One! Hear his/her deeds and promises! Cover him/her with Your protective cloak, watch over him/her and keep between him/her and danger, we pray!**

**(Name of Patron), accept our sacrifice!**

*The teen driver and family say:*

**(Name of Patron), accept our sacrifice!**

*The Head turns to the teen driver and says:*

**You, (name), wish to learn to drive a car, which is a great privilege. Once you are out on the roads alone, you will hold your life and the lives of others in your hands. This is a great responsibility.**

**Before your family and the Kindreds, tell us what you have done to be worthy to join the world of responsible adults? What have you done to add to the quality of our community?**

*The Teen Driver responds with a short tale of his/her community service.*

*The Head says:*

**Well done, (name)! For this reason your family will now grant your request. But you must swear before the Kindreds and our family Spirit Allies that you will follow the rules we set down here. Will you swear?**

*The Teen Driver responds:*

**I will!**

*The Head says:*

**Place your hand on the base of the candle and say, "I swear by the Fire"**

*The Teen Driver says:*

**I swear by the Fire!**

*The Head says:*

**Now place your hand on the Well and say, "I swear by the Well"**

*The Teen Driver says:*

**I swear by the Well!**

*The Head says:*

**And finally place your hand on the Tree and say, "I swear by the Tree"**

*The Teen Drive says:*

**I swear by the Tree!**

*The Head says:*

**Place your hand on your heart and say, "I swear to drive safely and obey all traffic laws."**

*The Teen Driver says:*

**I swear to drive safely and obey all traffic laws.**

*The Head says:*

**I swear I will not operate any vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.**

*The Teen Driver says:*

**I swear I will not operate any vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.**

*The Head says:*

**I swear I will ensure that everyone in the vehicle wears a seat belt.**

*The Teen Driver says:*

**I swear I will ensure that everyone in the vehicle wears a seatbelt.**

*The Head says:*

**I swear to follow all the restrictions of a Learners Permit.**

*The Teen Driver says:*

**I swear to follow all the restrictions of a Learners Permit.**

*The Head says:*

**I swear that I will not send or read text messages or talk on a cell phone while driving.**

*The Teen Driver says:*

**I swear that I will not send or read text messages or talk on a cell phone while driving.**

*And other vows required by the parents may be added here.*

*The Head says:*

**May the Kindreds and our Spirit Allies witness my oath and hold me accountable should I foreswear myself.**

*The Teen Driver says:*

**May the Kindreds and our Spirit Allies witness my oath and hold me accountable should I foreswear myself.**

*And other persons present who will be teaching the teen how to drive them come forward and join the head of the household in saying:*

**I, too, swear before the Kindreds and our Spirit Allies.**

**I swear that I will drive safely and obey all traffic laws.**

**I swear that I will not operate any vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.**

**I swear that I will track (Teen Drivers name)'s behind-the-wheel practice and progress in a practice driving log.**

**I also swear that I will listen to (Teen Driver's name)'s explanations and concerns, and will provide respectful feedback when riding with him/her in the car.**

**May the Kindreds and our Spirit Allies witness my oath and hold me accountable should I foreswear myself.**

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!***

*All say:*

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!***

*The Head says:*

**Great (Patron)! Mighty Kindreds! We thank you for witnessing our oaths.**

**Manannan mac Lir! We thank You for Your aid with the Gates.**

***Dúntar na geataí!* Let the Gates be closed!**

**Earth Mother! Once more we thank You for allowing us life, that we may learn and love.**

**May the blessings of the Kindreds shine on us all. This rite is ended.**

## **Part 2 – THE VIGIL**

*The night before the final drivers test, the Teen Driver retires alone to his/her room or some other, private place, and meditates, or holds ritual, or studies the driver's manual, or all three, until bedtime. In this way the teen may prove to him/herself that s/he is mature enough to take on the responsibility of safe driving.*

## **Part 3 – THE CELEBRATION**

*After the successful completion of the drivers test, the family gathers before the home altar. The Teen Driver places his/her temporary full drivers license (or it's equivalent) on the altar.*

*The Head says:*

**(Name of Teen Driver), today you demonstrated that you have learned the mechanics of driving a car. While this is only a beginning, we are very proud of you. This is a great and powerful accomplishment, the first of many in your life.**

**You left here this morning a child and returned an adult, having proved yourself in facing a challenge of knowledge, skill, and responsibility.**

**So are you ready now to lead this household today in the worship of the Gods? Will you take your place in the world of responsible adults?**

*The Teen Driver responds:*

**Today was the end of one journey and the beginning of another. I realize that I have much to learn, and I thank you, my parents and my Gods, for your support in this trial.**

**And I will proudly lead this household in worship!**

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!***

*All say:*

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!***

*The Teen Driver takes his/her place before the altar.*

*The Teen Driver offers grain to the Earth Mother, saying:*

**Great Lady! We remember and worship You at this time, for You make all life possible.**

*The Teen Driver puts silver into the Well saying:*

**Sacred Well, we connect you to the Wells of all the world, and to the homes of our Holy Dead.**

*The Teen Driver lights a candle and lights incense from the candle flame, saying:*

**Sacred Fire, we connect you to the Fires of the Sky, and to the powers of the Gods.**

*The Teen Driver censes and asperses the World Tree, saying:*

**Sacred Tree, send your roots into the Underworld, spread your branches into the Heavens, be the pathway to the Otherworlds, that our voices may go to the Kindreds!**

*The Teen Driver pours oil into the Offering Bowl, saying:*

**Manannan mac Lir! Come and aid us here! Open the ways between the Worlds, free our voices that we may be heard, carry our words to the Kindreds!**

***Osclaítear na geataí!* Let the Gates be open!**

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh!* So be it!**

*The Teen Driver lights incense and calls on the Kindreds, saying:*

**Mighty Ancestors! Noble Spirits of the Land! Shining Gods and Goddesses! Without You this world would be a barren place. But with You in our lives all things are possible. Kindreds! Accept our sacrifice!**

*The Teen Driver lights more incense, calling on the Patron of the household, saying:*

**(Name of Patron), I stand before you, leading our family's rite for the first time. As I take my place before You as a free adult, I give You my thanks for Your aid and support.**

**(Patron)! We re-affirm our love and our trust, and we thank You for Your love and Your trust in return. Let us once again we renew our old bargain.**

**(Patron)! Accept our sacrifice!**

*The Teen Driver then offers to his/her own personal Spirit Allies among the Kindreds, in the joyful spirit of thanksgiving, ending with these or other words:*

**Loving Kindreds, while I stand before you as a leader in my family, I also stand here as my own self. In the journey of life there are many challenges, many turnings, with all leading to growth. I know that there is much to learn, and much to do, and I also know that You have stood beside and behind me, giving me the wisdom, patience and strength to come this far. And I pray that You will continue to walk with me as I begin the journey of manhood (womanhood). Kindreds, I humbly thank You, and my family thanks You.**

*The Teen Driver offers incense to the Kindreds.*

*The Head of the Household then takes the Omen for the rite, and for the new journey that the Teen Driver is embarking upon.*

*The Teen Driver then takes up the cup, saying:*

**Mighty Kindreds, we have come to You once again and made our sacrifices in joy and thanksgiving. We now ask that You return the favor and grant us the blessings of the omen!**

**Dearest family, is it our will that this be so?**

*All say:*

**It is!**

*The Teen Driver raises the cup, saying:*

**Hallow these Waters! Fill them with the powers of (the omens). Grant that we may drink of your blessings!**

*The Teen Driver lowers the cup while saying:*

**Behold, the Waters of Life!**

*The family drinks of the Waters.*

*The Teen Driver says:*

**Once again we have renewed our ties to the Kindreds. Now let us thank Them for joining us here this day.**

**Loving (Patron)! Shining, Noble and Mighty Ones! Once again You have showed Your love for us, and once again we find joy in Your presence.**

**And so we say, *Go raigh maith agaibh!* We thank You!**

**Manannan mac Lir! *Go raigh maith agaibh!* We thank You for Your aid with the Gates. *Dúntar na geataí!* Let the Gates be closed!**

**Earth Mother! Once more we thank You for allowing us life, that we may learn and love.**

**May the blessings of the Kindreds shine on us all. This rite is ended.**

*All gather in a circle, holding hands. The Head says:*

**Well done!**

## ***b) House blessing or cleansing***

### **A Welsh House Blessing**

*The owners of the house (the Householders), and their friends and family, gather with the Priest or other celebrant in the main living room of the house.*

*Items needed for this rite are a candle, a bowl of water, drawn from the taps or well of the house, a small bowl of cooking oil, two bowls of milk, a small cast iron frying pan, a plate with small pieces of uncooked pork or other food, and the makings of a fire (see below).*

*When all have gathered, the Priest or Celebrant rings a bell three times three.*

*The Priest says:*

**Earth Mother Dôn! This house rests on your bosom, upheld by You in the world. May You continue to support and keep this family as you have this house. *Bydded felly!* Be it so!**

*The Priest leads everyone in the Two Powers meditation, emphasizing that each person is an axis mundi, connecting the Heavens and the Underworld with the Midworld. The people are also asked to reserve the Powers within themselves for the rite.*

*The Priest says:*

**Mighty Kindreds! We ask You to witness our rite, to bless this house, and all who live in it. *Bydded felly!* Be it so!**

### **BUILDING THE FIRE**

*The Priest takes the hands of the two Senior Householders, and says:*

**In Wales in olden days, when a man would inherit his father's house, he could not claim it as his own until he had built a fire on its hearth. And today, in the eyes of the Kindreds, this house is not yours until it has been claimed by you in the sight of the Gods.**

*The Priest leads the People to the place of the hearth. This may be a fireplace, a stove, a water heater, etc. If a fireplace is used, it should be ready with the makings of a fire. If a stove is used, it will be treated differently if gas or electric (see below) but a water heater may only be used if it is gas, and the pilot light should be out.*

*If the hearth is a fireplace:*

*The fire is prepared and lit by the Householders. As they light the fire, they say:*

**Small fire, bright fire,  
Burn, little one, and grow strong, we pray.  
Your strength is our strength; your light, our light.**

*The Priest says:*

**Sacred Fire, Burn in the hearth of this family.  
Provide them with comfort and joy in the darkness.  
Take their gifts to the Gods in the Heavens.  
Sacred Fire, glow warm and bright!**

*All say:*

**Sacred Fire, glow warm and bright!**

*Some of the oil is poured into the frying pan. The rest of the oil is poured on the fire.*

*The Priest says:*

**Shining Ones! We give you oil, that You may share this feast with us. Watch over these your worshippers, we pray, that they may live in happiness in their own home.**

**Shining Ones, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Shining Ones, accept our sacrifice!**

*The senior householders cook the pork or other food over the fire until done. While the meat is cooking, the assembled people share one of the bowls of milk.*

*The Priest holds up the second bowl of milk and says:*

**Spirits of this House, we give you milk, that You may share this feast with us. Watch over these Your allies, we pray, that they may live in safety in their own home.**

**Spirits of this House, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Spirits of this House, accept our sacrifice!**

*One of the Senior Householders takes the remains of the first bowl of milk and sets it in a safe place. S/he places the second bowl of milk just outside the main door of the house.*

*Just as the pork is about to be finished cooking, the Priest says:*

**Mighty Ancestors! We give you pork (or other food), the gift of Annwfn, that you may share this feast with us. Watch over these your children, we pray, that they may live in wisdom in their own home.**

**Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!**

*The cooked pork is shared among the people present, with some reserved for the Ancestors. This can be thrown on the fire or buried in the garden outside.*

*If the hearth is a stove:*

*The stove is lit by the Householders. If it is a gas stove, the candle is lit from the flames. If it is an electric stove, a match is lit from a hot burner and the match is used to light the candle. As they light the candle, the householders say:*

**Small fire, bright fire,  
Burn, little one, and grow strong, we pray.  
Your strength is our strength; your light, our light.**

*The candle is placed in a holder on the stove, burning.  
The Priest says:*

**Sacred Fire, Burn in the hearth of this family.  
Provide them with comfort and joy in the darkness.  
Take their gifts to the Gods in the Heavens.  
Sacred Fire, glow warm and bright!**

*All say:*

**Sacred Fire, glow warm and bright!**

*Some of the oil is poured into the frying pan. The rest of the oil is reserved to be buried in the garden later or saved for a fire elsewhere.*

*The Priest holds up the bowl of oil and says:*

**Shining Ones! We give you oil, that You may share this feast with us. Watch over these your worshippers, we pray, that they may live in happiness in their own home.**

**Shining Ones, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Shining Ones, accept our sacrifice!**

*The senior householders cook the pork or other food on the stove until done. While the meat is cooking, the assembled people share one of the bowls of milk.*

*The Priest holds up the second bowl of milk and says:*

**Spirits of this House, we give you milk, that You may share this feast with us. Watch over these Your allies, we pray, that they may live in safety in their own home.**

**Spirits of this House, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Spirits of this House, accept our sacrifice!**

*One of the Senior Householders takes the remains of the first bowl of milk and sets it in a safe place. S/he places the second bowl of milk just outside the main door of the house.*

*Just as the pork is about to be finished cooking, the Priest says:*

**Mighty Ancestors! We give you pork (or other food), the gift of Annwfn, that you may share this feast with us. Watch over these your children, we pray, that they may live in wisdom in their own home.**

**Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!**

*The cooked pork is shared among the people present, with some reserved for the Ancestors. This can be buried in the garden outside or taken to some other suitable place.*

*If the hearth is a water heater:*

*The Householders light the water heater pilot light. As they light the fire, they say:*

**Small fire, bright fire,  
Burn, little one, and grow strong, we pray.  
Your strength is our strength; your light, our light.**

*When the pilot light is lit, it is used to light another match that is used to light the candle. The candle is taken to the kitchen and placed on the stove.*

*The Priest says:*

**Sacred Fire, Burn in the hearth of this family.  
Provide them with comfort and joy in the darkness.  
Take their gifts to the Gods in the Heavens.  
Sacred Fire, glow warm and bright!**

*All say:*

**Sacred Fire, glow warm and bright!**

*Some of the oil is poured into the frying pan. The rest of the oil is reserved to be buried in the garden later, or taken to a fire elsewhere.*

*The Priest holds up the bowl of oil and says:*

**Shining Ones! We give you oil, that You may share this feast with us. Watch over these your worshippers, we pray, that they may live in happiness in their own home.  
Shining Ones, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Shining Ones, accept our sacrifice!**

*The Senior Householders cook the pork or other food on the stove until done. While the meat is cooking, the assembled people share one of the bowls of milk.*

*The Priest holds up the second bowl of milk and says:*

**Spirits of this House, we give you milk, that You may share this feast with us. Watch over these Your allies, we pray, that they may live in safety in their own home.  
Spirits of this House, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Spirits of this House, accept our sacrifice!**

*One of the Senior Householders takes the remains of the first bowl of milk and sets it in a safe place. S/he places the second bowl of milk just outside the main door of the house.*

*Just as the pork is about to be finished cooking, the Priest says:*

**Mighty Ancestors! We give you pork (or other food), the gift of Annwfn, that you may share this feast with us. Watch over these your children, we pray, that they may live with wisdom in their own home.  
Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!**

*The People say:*

**Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!**

*The cooked pork is shared among the people present, with some reserved for the Ancestors. This can be buried in the garden outside or taken to some other suitable place.*

### **BLESSING THE HOUSE**

*If the hearth was a fireplace, the candle is now lit from the fire.*

*The two Senior Householders take the candle and bowl of water while the Priest leads them and the People into every room of the house, one at a time. In each room, the Senior Householders cense and asperse everything, while the Priest says:*

**Let the Waters of the Earth cleanse this room of all negativity!**

**Let the Fires of the Heavens burn away all misfortune!**

**May the Kindreds bless this place and all who dwell within!**

***Bydded felly!***

*The People say:*

***Bydded felly!***

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***BEATING THE BOUNDS (Optional)***

*Should the householders desire, they may now take the Fire and Water outside to the boundaries of the property. The Priest carries a small bowl of mixed oats and cornmeal. Because candles don't do well out of doors, a smudge stick or some incense may be lit from the candle and carried. The candle should then be left behind in the house. If one of the householders is male, he should do the aspersing. Should he wish, he may also urinate a small amount at each boundary corner. At each corner of the boundary, going around the property in a clockwise direction, they cense and asperse that corner, while the Priest says:*

**We mark this boundary by Fire and Water. Let the Power of the Kindreds guard this space and evil keep away!**

*After the Householders have censed and aspersed each corner, the Priest says:*

**Earth Mother! I give you oats and corn that this land may be blessed and all growing things thrive!**

*The Priest throws a handful of oats and corn upon the ground.*

***Bydded felly!***

*The People say:*

***Bydded felly!***

\*\*\*\*\*

*When the Priest and Householders return from beating the bounds, or if this is not done, they return from blessing each room of the house, they all gather once again in the main living room of the house.*

*The Priest says:*

**Mighty Kindreds! We thank You for Your aid this day! Earth Mother, may Your blessings always flow upon this family.**

*(Priest says names of Householders)!* **The fire has been lit and the house has been cleansed. May you thrive in the comfort of your newly blessed home!**

**Walk in joy, everyone! This rite is ended! *Bydded felly!* So be it!**

*The People say:*

***Bydded felly!* So be it!**

### **c) A child's first day at school or college**

#### **Rite For a Child's First Day at School**

*This rite is for a small child getting ready to go to school for the first time. Since children tend to have short attention spans, this will be quite simple. Children also don't always react the way we expect, so be prepared to improvise, if necessary. Some children are excited about going to school, and others are terrified. This rite is meant to bolster the child's confidence so that s/he may be brave and open to this new way of life.*

*Many children have discovered a Patron by an early age. If your child has not, then that section may be omitted.*

*The parent(s) of the child take him or her to the household altar in the morning before going to school for the first time. The Parent lights a candle, and then lights a stick of incense from the flame.*

*Parent says:*

**(Child's name), today is a big day for you! So let's ask the Gods to help make this a very wonderful day as well, ok?**

*The Parent takes the child's hand and they face the altar. The Parent says:*

**Gods and Goddesses! (Child's name) and I call to you today. We give you incense and ask that you hear us and smile upon us.**

**Today (Child's name) is starting his/her first day of school! S/he is going out of our home and joining with other children, to play and to learn and to grow. This will be an exciting day!**

**Let (Child's name) find new friends today! Let (Child's name) discover new ways and new ideas today! Mighty Gods, keep your protection over (Child's name) today.**

*The Parent turns to the child and says:*

**(Child's name), are you still a baby?**

*Child responds (we hope):*

**No!**

*The Parent asks:*

**Are you a big girl (boy) now?**

*Child responds (we hope):*

**Yes!**

*Parent says:*

**Mommy and Daddy love you very, very much. We know that today will be new and may be scary, but we also know that it will be new, fun and different!**

**The Gods also love you very much, and they will watch over you and take care of you while you are away from home.**

**Do you want to give something to (Child's Patron) now? You can ask Him/Her for a special favor for today, if you want.**

*The Child may make an offering to his/her Patron. Encourage the child to speak to his/her God/dess.*

*Parent says:*

**Now close your eyes and listen very, very carefully. Is (Child's Patron, or 'The Gods' if no Patron) saying something to you? What did S/He say?**

*The Parent gives the Child a big hug. They stand before the altar again.*

*Parent says:*

**(Child's name), repeat after me. Tell the Gods what I'm saying. OK?**

*Depending on how the Child is reacting to the idea of going to school, pick one or more of the following three affirmations, or come up with one of your own:*

**1) Gods and Goddesses! I will be brave today!**

*Child repeats:*

**I will be brave today.**

OR

**2) Gods and Goddesses! I will have an exciting day today!**

*Child repeats:*

**I will have an exciting day today!**

OR

**3) Gods and Goddesses! New things will amaze me today!**

*Child repeats:*

**New things will amaze me today!**

*Then continue with the following.*

*Parent says:*

**I will meet wonderful new kids today!**

*Child repeats:*

**I will meet wonderful new kids today.**

*Parent says:*

**But most importantly, I will have lots of fun today!**

*Child repeats:*

**I will have fun today!**

*Parent says:*

**Be it so!**

**Now, say goodbye to the Gods and Goddesses and let's get ready to go.**

*The Child says goodbye to the Deities as s/he knows best.*

*The Parent turns to the Child and says:*

**Mommy and Daddy are very proud of you.**

**The Gods are very proud of you.**

**We know that you are a smart, happy and wonderful person,**

**And we give you our blessings.**

**We love you.**

*The Parent kisses the Child and blows out the candle, then says:*

**Now let's start this new, big day!**

*The Parent hugs the Child once more.*

**Question #6: Write a healing ritual different from other rituals written for this course.**

In healing rituals I have performed, there have been two methods of going about it. The first is dependant on being able to perform two rites fairly close together – the first when the moon is waning, where the Powers of the Sky are invoked to burn away the illness, and the Powers of the Earth are invoked to wash away the burned out detritus; and the second shortly thereafter, when the moon is waxing, where the Powers of the Sky and of the Earth are invoked together to bring strength to the patient. This is the ideal, especially when dealing with cancer.

However, the performance of two sequential rites is not always possible for various reasons. In this case these two techniques can be combined, with the working using all three actions, one after the

other (burning away, washing away, strengthening). This can be done in any hearth culture, calling on gods associated with fire and water, and by calling on the Spirits I call the *Matronae* (the Mothers) whom I see (for this purpose) as being two deceased, female relatives of the patient joined by my own, deceased mother, who is there to help me form a connection with the other two. These Spirits are called upon to help direct the current of power that the priest or ritualist is sending out. The inclusion of the patient's own ancestors also strengthens his/her connection to the magic.

Under no circumstances is this rite to be used *instead of* professional, medical treatment. Rather, it is meant to be supportive of such treatment.

For the purposes of this paper I shall write down the combined rite, calling upon Brigit (a Goddess of Fire) and the Daghdha (Keeper of the Cauldron of Plenty). The rite will also assume that there are other people present (like the patient's Grove), but it can also be done without their help (though their help is better).

## **A Rite of Healing**

*The patient is laid out on a towel or blanket in the center of the ritual area and told to just drift away. If there are other people present, they are seated in a circle on the edge of the ritual area.*

*The Priest or Ritualist rings a bell three times three.*

*First Ring – Priest says:*

**Ancestors!**

*Second Ring – Priest says:*

**Nature Spirits!**

*Third Ring – Priest says:*

**Shining and Chthonic Ones!**

**We will meet You at the Sacred Center when we open the Gates to the Otherworlds.  
*Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!***

*The Priest calls on the Earth Mother, placing his hands on the ground:*

**O Goddess of the warm, moist Earth,  
O Holy Mother Danu,  
O Mother Earth, unfold Your arms that in Your warm embrace  
We'll know Your endless love.**

**Earth Mother, we honor You!**

*All kiss the Earth. Priest stands and says:*

**Offerings we make to You, O greatest of them All!  
We offer oats, the grain of ancient Eire.  
We also offer corn to You the fruit of this new land.  
Earth Mother, accept our sacrifice!**

*Oatmeal and cornmeal are scattered on the ground.*

*The Priest says:*

**Children of Earth, we are here to bring aid and succor to this (wo)man.  
We have before us (Name), who has called upon us for our aid,  
And for the aid of the Gods.**

**With your help, we will ask the Gods to let healing power flow through us,  
And we will ask the Matronae to help us direct this holy power,  
That cleansing, strengthening and healing may come to (Name).**

**So let us join together as One in mind, heart and power,  
Working as One with the Kindreds,  
That we all may heal (Name).**

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh!***

*The Priest offers silver to the Well, stirring the water with his hand, saying:*

**Sacred Well, we connect you to all the wells in all the world – may you bring to us the  
Powers of the Underworld!**

*The Priest offers oil to the Fire, pouring in a clockwise direction, saying:*

**Sacred Fire, we connect you to the Powers shining in the Heavens – bringing order into  
the world!**

*The Priest censes and asperses the World Tree, saying:*

**Sacred Tree, let your roots grow down into the Underworld – let your branches grow up  
into the Heavens! Stand astride the Midworld and carry our words to all Worlds!**

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh!***

*If there are others present, the Priest then says the following. If s/he is working alone, this happens internally:*

**Children of Earth, close your eyes and feel yourself relax. Breathe slowly and deeply. Feel all the tension in your head and neck release and flow down, down, through your body, and down into the Earth. As you breathe, feel the tension in your shoulders and in your chest release and flow down, down, down into the Earth. Keep breathing, Children of Earth, and feel the tension in your back and in your waist just let go, release, and flow down through your body. Now feel the tension in your hips and in your stomach also let go and flow down and away. Breathe some more, and let the tension in your legs and ankles release and flow down, down, down. Breathe gently, and feel yourself totally relaxed.**

**Now turn your palms upward.**

**Children of Earth, cast your mind's eye down deep into the Earth below you. Pass through the ground, down past soil, past rock, deep, deep, deep, until you come to the Waters of the Earth flowing beneath us all. See the dark Waters flowing, feel their cold power, hear them sliding though the Earth. These are the Powers of Potential, the cleansing Powers of the Earth.**

**Now as you inhale, feel these Waters flowing upwards towards you, rising higher and higher through the Earth towards your feet. As you breathe, the Waters enter your feet and begin to fill your body, pooling for a moment in the Cauldron of your Loins. The**

**Waters overflow and continue filling you as you breathe, pooling in the Cauldron of your Heart. They once again overflow and continue filling you, now pooling in the Cauldron of your Mind. And as you breathe, the Waters rise up into you and flow out again through the palms of your hands, flowing back into the Earth, making a complete circuit.**

**O Waters of the Earth, deep and dark,  
Arise primeval powers, fill us now with all your wondrous possibilities,  
That through the Earth, our Mother,  
We may ground and join as One.**

**Now, Children of Earth, cast your mind's eye upwards, into the Heavens. See yourself pass upwards, past the trees, through the clouds, up towards the firmament. And there, above you, you see a star or a moon or a sun, directly over your head, waiting just for you. And as you inhale, this star sends down a cone of light, down, down, down towards your head, and this light of the Heavens, this ordering power, bathes your head, warming the Waters in the Cauldron of your Mind. And as you breathe in, the light flows down lower into your body, warming the Waters in the Cauldron of your Heart. And as you continue to breathe, the light fills your entire body, warming the Waters in the Cauldron of your Loins. Keep breathing, Children of Earth, and see the light flowing in from your head now flow out through the palms of your hands, and back up into the Heavens, created another complete circuit.**

**O Fires of the Sky, O brilliant light!  
Descend and crystallize within us now  
That spark of order on which life depends,  
That through the Sky, our Father,  
We may shine and share as One.**

**Breathe, Children of Earth, and feel the Waters of the Earth flow up through your body and out through your hands. See the Light of the Heavens flow down through your body and out through your hands. Two full circuits flowing together, filling and renewing you.**

**You Powers Dark and Light,  
You liquid fire!  
Conjoin and blend this mixture volatile  
That Powers great may merge within ourselves,  
Connecting all the Worlds  
So that the Axis is complete.**

**Feel these Powers, Children of Earth! See their bright, sparkling might as they mix within you. Hear them sizzle as they blend.**

**Feel your hands and body tingle with all this power!**

**Remember these Powers – be able to call Them back. We will need them later, and you will need to bring them forth to manifest in the world, feeding them to me that I may send them on to (Name).**

**But for now, bring your awareness back to this world, that we may continue with the rite.**

*The Priest calls on the Gatekeeper:*

**Manannan mac Lir! Gatekeeper! Ride upon the waves towards us, ride in Your chariot, drawn by Your foaming horses! Ride to us and join us here we pray! Join Your magic with ours that we may open the Gates to the Otherworlds, that we may hear and be heard by the Kindreds!**

**Mighty mac Lir, accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest pours oil on the Fire.*

*The People sing:*

**Gatekeeper, open the Portals  
Between the Gods and mortals!  
Power freely flows  
As our magic grows!  
--by Sue Parker**

*They all begin to chant:*

**Open the Gates! Open the Gates! Open the Gates!**

*The Priest starts spinning in a circle, counterclockwise, holding his staff, wand, or arm in the air, saying:*

**Let the Well open as a Gate! Let the Fire open as a Gate! Let the Tree connect the Worlds!  
Osclaítear na geataí! Let the Gates be Opened!**

*The People say:*

**Let the Gates be opened!**

*The Priest says:*

**We are now woven into the fabric of the Cosmos. The Kindreds may hear our thoughts and know our hearts, so let there be only truth here.**

*The Priest continues:*

**Let us now make our sacrifices to the Kindreds, that they may join us here and lend us their Power as well.**

*The Priest offers beer to the Ancestors.*

**We call to our Ancestors, those of Blood, who gave us life.  
We call to those of Heart, whom we have loved and lost.  
We also call to those of Spirit, those Ancient Wise of fame and skill who aid us in our ways.**

**Ancient Ones! Come to us and join us here this day! Stand behind us and whisper wisdom in our ears, that we may do what needs to be done.**

**Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest pours beer on the ground.*

*The Priest takes a bowl of seeds, nuts and fruit and says:*

**We call to the Spirits of the Land, those Spirits who share this world with us.  
We call to the Spirits of Motion, You who crawl, swim, run or fly.  
We call to the Spirits of Place, You rocks, trees and plants.  
We call to our Spirit Allies, who join us in our work.**

**Land Spirits! Come to us and join us here this day! Let us keep the old bargain, that all may thrive in our warm friendship.**

**Land Spirits! Accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest scatters the seeds, nuts and fruit.*

*The Priest takes whiskey and says:*

**We call to the Gods and Goddesses of all our Peoples!  
We call to the Gods in the Heavens, shining in the skies.  
We call to the Gods in the Midworld, striding across the Land.  
We call to the Gods in the Underworld, guiding and guarding our Dead.**

**Shining Ones! Come to us and join us here this day!  
Let the light of our Fire guide You to us that we may bask in Your beauty.**

**Shining and Chthonic Ones! Accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest pours the whiskey into the Fire.*

*The Priest says:*

**Close your eyes, Children of Earth. See our Ancestors as they approach us. Feel the curious stares of the Spirits of the Land as they arrive. Feel the strength and power of the Gods and Goddesses as they join us here.**

**Mighty Kindreds, we welcome you.**

*The Priest takes butter and approaches the Fire, saying:*

**Lady Brigit! Healer, armor maker, Fire tender! Join us here and aid us now, we pray. Lady of Fire, we ask You to direct the Fires of the Sky down into us here, that we may be Your vessels, conduits of Your great power, that healing may occur for (Name).**

**Lady Brigit, accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest pours the butter on the Fire.*

*The Priest takes a bowl of porridge to the Well and says:*

**Great Daghdha! Bearer of the Cauldron of Plenty, holder of the staff of life and death, singer with Your harp of magic! Join us here and aid us now, we pray. Lord of the Cauldron, we ask you to direct the Waters of the Earth up into us here, that we may be Your vessels, conduits of Your great power, that healing may occur for (Name).**

**Great Daghdha, accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest offers the porridge to the Well. Priest says:*

**Children of Earth, close your eyes and see the Lady Brigit, shining in the sky, and the Lord Daghdha, slapping his belly and laughing out loud, as they join us here today.**

**Lady Brigit, Lord Daghdha, we welcome you.**

*The Priest takes a pack of Virginia Slim cigarettes for his mother, Shirley, to the Fire. He also takes offerings for the two female relatives of the patient. (Should this rite be performed by anyone else besides me, they may choose their own female relative and bring the appropriate offering.)*

*This following part will have to be created on site, using the information gleaned from the patient about his female relatives.*

*The Priest invokes the two relatives, and makes sacrifice to them.*

*The Priest invokes his own relative, and makes sacrifice to her.*

*The Priest says:*

**Matronae! (Name of first relative), (Name of second relative), join us here and lend your aid to your loved one here. Help us by focusing and directing the Power that we will be sending to him/her. Help us heal today!**

**(Name of Priest's relative), Mother, please help me connect with the other two ladies present. Go between us and guide me, be the glue that keeps us together.**

**Matronae, accept our sacrifices!**

**Children of Earth, close your eyes and see these three amazing ladies standing here, full of concern for (Name) and full of love. There can be no power greater than we have assembled here.**

**Matronae, we welcome you.**

*The Priest takes oil to the Fire, and says:*

**Matronae! Great Daghdha! Lady Brigit! Great Kindreds! Healing and magic are what we need. Healing and magic are what we seek. Think of us, aid us and love us, we pray.**

**May our piety increase Your magic,  
May our courage increase Your power,  
And may our fertile spirits show the world Your abundance.**

**Kindreds all, accept our sacrifices!**

*The Priest pours the whiskey on the Fire.*

*An Omen is taken.*

*The Priest elevates the cup and says:*

**Mighty Kindreds! Great Allies! Give us the strength we will need to do this deed. Grant us the Blessings of all the Worlds! Fill us with Your love, Your caring, and Your joy that we might be the key to healing wealth of spirit. Fill us, we pray!**

*The Priest raises the cup and says:*

**Kindreds! Hallow these Waters! Grant that we may be filled with all Your wondrous possibilities! Grant that we may succeed at our magic! Grant that our alliance shall work healing in the world.**

*The Priest exhales and slowly lowers the cup, saying:*

**Behold, the Waters of Life.**

*The Priest says:*

**Drink, Children of Earth. Drink of the Blessings of the Gods. Drink of the Blessings of all the Kindreds. Know that these blessings will give us what we need to heal our friend. Drink, and be happy!**

*All drink of the blessings.*

*The Priest says:*

**We are now as powerful as we will ever be. Let us do this thing.**

**They are here, all of Them. See Them in your mind's eye. Feel their power. Hear their gentle breathing. There is expectancy in the air.**

**Children of Earth, remember the Powers of Earth and Sky flowing through you. Feel them moving easily through your bodies. See the Sky Power flowing from the skies through the Goddess Brigit and into you. Feel the Earth Power flowing from the deeps through the Good God Daghdha and into you. Know that these Powers are for us to call upon and use.**

**Let the palms of your hands face me. Let the Powers flow through your palms and project them out through the air towards me. Let them fly to fill me. Do not use your own power, rather only let the powers of the Cosmos flow through you. Be a willing vessel!**

**We begin with just the Powers of the Heavens. Staunch the Powers of the Earth for a moment, letting only the burning power of fire flow through you now.**

**Intone, that we may all build the power!**

*The Priest gets the People intoning, and then says:*

**Lady Brigit, let the Fires of the Heavens flow through us all!**

**Matronae, help me focus and direct the power!**

*The Priest gets the sky power flowing through him and out of his hands. He sees the Goddess funneling the power into the People, and through them, to him. He sees Her feed the power into him directly. He sees the three Matronae deflecting and focusing the power coming out through his hands towards the patient.*

*The Priest kneels by the patient and looks at him/her through the eyes of trance. He sees the illness in the patient's body, like white spider webs, cloying the life force. With the aid of all, the Priest sees, feels and hears the power flow from his hands and down into the patient, burning away the dreadful disease. He runs his hands above the patient's body, not touching, from top to bottom, burning away the disease. If there are bad, concentrated spots, the Priest may linger over those spots until they too are burned away.*

*When this is done, the Priest says:*

**Keep intoning, Children of Earth! Now staunch the Powers of the Heavens and instead let loose with the Powers of the Earth, the dark waters of potential, that we may wash away the disease.**

**Good God Daghdha! Let the Waters of the Earth flow through us all!**

**Matronae, help me focus and direct the power!**

*When the intoning is going strong and the power is moving freely through him, the Priest sees the God funneling the power into the People, and through them, to him. He sees Him feed the power into him directly. He sees the three Matronae deflecting and focusing the power coming out through his hands towards the patient.*

*The Priest again kneels by the patient and looks at him/her through the eyes of trance. He sees the burnt out remains of the illness in the patient's body, defiling him. With the aid of all, the Priest sees, feels and hears the power flow from his hands and down into the patient, washing away all the detritus remaining from the burning away. He runs his hands above the patient's body, not touching, from top to bottom, seeing the bad wash away.*

*When this is done, the Priest says:*

**Keep intoning, Children of Earth! Release both the Powers of Earth and Sky! Feel them flowing from the Gods through your bodies and out through your hands! Fill me with those powers!**

**Brigit! Daghdha! Let me be Your vessel! Let Your powers flow through me to strengthen (Name)! Let Your powers flow through us all!**

**Matronae! Help me focus and direct this great power!**

*When the intoning is going strong and the power is moving freely through him, the Priest sees the Goddess and God funneling the power into the People, and through them, to him. He sees Them feed the power into him directly. He sees the three Matronae deflecting and focusing the power coming out through his hands towards the patient.*

*The Priest again kneels by the patient and looks at him/her through the eyes of trance. He sees the shadows of the illness in the patient's body. He sees the pink, healthy flesh, still untouched by the disease. With the aid of all, the Priest sees, feels and hears the power flow from his hands and down into the patient, avoiding the shadows of disease but strengthening and filling the healthy parts of the patient. He runs his hands above the patient's body, not touching, from top to bottom, filling the patient with the Powers of the Cosmos.*

*And then the Priest, with the Powers flowing strongly, gently lays his hands upon the patient. He experiences a shock of power flow into the patient, rejuvenating and strengthening the patient.*

*When this is done, and the time to end draws near, the Priest gently removes his hands and brings the intoning down into silence.*

*The Priest says:*

**It is done.**

*The Priest then says:*

**Gods and Ladies, we are so grateful to you. When we feel Your power, our love for You grows exponentially. Our wonder makes our eyes grow wide, and our joy is blinding!**

**Mighty Kindreds, all of You who have aided us this day, we say,  
Go raigh maith agaibh. We thank You.**

*The Priest stands and starts the chant, spinning clockwise, his staff, wand or finger pointing into the air:*

**Close the Gates, Close the Gates, Close the Gates!**

**Let the Fire be flame, let the Well be water, let the Tree return to the Midworld.  
Dúntar na geataí – Let the Gates be closed!**

**Earth Mother, once again You have upheld us in our work. Once again You have absorbed what we do not need. Teach us to help You, teach us to heal You.  
Earth Mother, go raigh maith agat! We thank You!**

*The Priest helps the patient to sit up. He invites everyone present to come and give the patient a warm hug.*

*The Priest says:*

**Walk with joy, Children of Earth, this healing rite is ended.**

*The Priest rings the bell three times three.*

**Question #7: Write a protection ritual different from the other rituals written for this course.**

### **Protection for a Soldier Off to War**

*Before the rite, the soldier to be protected is asked to bring some kind of token that can be worn under clothes while at the front. Or the Grove or Priest can supply something. This token, or talisman, is placed on the altar before the rite begins.*

*The rite is best performed as a standard blessing rite but with the main intention being protection. The Priest may perform this rite with only the soldier present, or it may be done in a group setting.*

*The Morrighan will be called on to turn Her face away from the soldier. If the soldier is male, a male warrior from ancient times, such as Cu Chulainn may be called on to provide strength and fighting ability. If the soldier is female, an warrior ancestor of spirit, such as Bodicca, may be called on for the same. While this rite is written from a vaguely Irish Gaelic perspective, it may easily be translated into any hearth culture with a bit of work.*

*The Priest or Ritualist rings a bell three times three.*

*First Ring – Priest says:*

**Ancestors!**

*Second Ring – Priest says:*

**Nature Spirits!**

*Third Ring – Priest says:*

**Shining and Chthonic Ones!**

**We will meet You at the Sacred Center when we open the Gates to the Otherworlds.  
Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!**

*The Priest calls on the Earth Mother, placing his hands on the ground:*

**O Goddess of the warm, moist Earth,  
O Holy Mother Danu,  
O Mother Earth, unfold Your arms that in Your warm embrace  
We'll know Your endless love.**

**Earth Mother, we honor You!**

*All kiss the Earth. Priest stands and says:*

**Offerings we make to You, O greatest of them All!  
We offer oats, the grain of ancient Eire.  
We also offer corn to You the fruit of this new land.  
Earth Mother, accept our sacrifice!**

*Oatmeal and cornmeal are scattered on the ground.*

*The Priest says:*

**We are here to ask the Kindreds to protect our friend, (Name), who is about to go into a war zone. We shall call upon the Morrighan to turn her face away, and we shall call upon Cu Chulainn to give him strength and the fighting ability to keep himself safe.**

**This is serious work we do here! A life is at stake. So let us make our sacrifices in hope and determination.**

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!***

*The Priest offers silver to the Well, stirring the water with his hand, saying:*

**Sacred Well, we connect you to all the wells in all the world – may you bring to us the Powers of the Underworld!**

*The Priest offers oil to the Fire, pouring in a clockwise direction, saying:*

**Sacred Fire, we connect you to the Powers shining in the Heavens – bringing order into the world!**

*The Priest censens and asperses the World Tree, saying:*

**Sacred Tree, let your roots grow down into the Underworld – let your branches grow up into the Heavens! Stand astride the Midworld and carry our words to all Worlds!**

***Bíodh sé amhlaidh! So be it!***

*The Priest then says the following:*

**Children of Earth, close your eyes and feel yourself relax. Breathe slowly and deeply. Feel all the tension in your head and neck release and flow down, down, through your body, and down into the Earth. As you breathe, feel the tension in your shoulders and in your chest release and flow down, down, down into the Earth. Keep breathing, Children of Earth, and feel the tension in your back and in your waist just let go, release, and flow down through your body. Now feel the tension in your hips and in your stomach also let go and flow down and away. Breathe some more, and let the tension in your legs and**

**ankles release and flow down, down, down. Breathe gently, and feel yourself totally relaxed.**

**Now turn your palms upward.**

**Children of Earth, cast your mind's eye down deep into the Earth below you. Pass through the ground, down past soil, past rock, deep, deep, deep, until you come to the Waters of the Earth flowing beneath us all. See the dark Waters flowing, feel their cold power, hear them sliding through the Earth. These are the Powers of Potential, the cleansing Powers of the Earth.**

**Now as you inhale, feel these Waters flowing upwards towards you, rising higher and higher through the Earth towards your feet. As you breathe, the Waters enter your feet and begin to fill your body, pooling for a moment in the Cauldron of your Loins. The Waters overflow and continue filling you as you breathe, pooling in the Cauldron of your Heart. They once again overflow and continue filling you, now pooling in the Cauldron of your Mind. And as you breathe, the Waters rise up into you and flow out again through the palms of your hands, flowing back into the Earth, making a complete circuit.**

**O Waters of the Earth, deep and dark,  
Arise primeval powers, fill us now with all your wondrous possibilities,  
That through the Earth, our Mother,  
We may ground and join as One.**

**Now, Children of Earth, cast your mind's eye upwards, into the Heavens. See yourself pass upwards, past the trees, through the clouds, up towards the firmament. And there, above you, you see a star or a moon or a sun, directly over your head, waiting just for you. And as you inhale, this star sends down a cone of light, down, down, down towards your head, and this light of the Heavens, this ordering power, bathes your head, warming the Waters in the Cauldron of your Mind. And as you breathe in, the light flows down lower into your body, warming the Waters in the Cauldron of your Heart. And as you continue to breathe, the light fills your entire body, warming the Waters in the Cauldron of your Loins. Keep breathing, Children of Earth, and see the light flowing in from your head now flow out through the palms of your hands, and back up into the Heavens, created another complete circuit.**

**O Fires of the Sky, O brilliant light!  
Descend and crystallize within us now  
That spark of order on which life depends,  
That through the Sky, our Father,  
We may shine and share as One.**

**Breathe, Children of Earth, and feel the Waters of the Earth flow up through your body and out through your hands. See the Light of the Heavens flow down through your body and out through your hands. Two full circuits flowing together, filling and renewing you.**

**You Powers Dark and Light,  
You liquid fire!  
Conjoin and blend this mixture volatile  
That Powers great may merge within ourselves,  
Connecting all the Worlds  
So that the Axis is complete.**

**Feel these Powers, Children of Earth! See their bright, sparkling might as they mix within you. Hear them sizzle as they blend.**

**Feel your hands and body tingle with all this power!**

**Remember these Powers – be able to call Them back. We will need them later, and you will need to bring them forth to manifest in the world, feeding them to us as we do our work.**

**But for now, bring your awareness back to this world, that we may continue with the rite.**

*The Priest calls on the Gatekeeper:*

**Manannan mac Lir! Gatekeeper! Ride upon the waves towards us, ride in Your chariot, drawn by Your foaming horses! Ride to us and join us here we pray! Join Your magic with ours that we may open the Gates to the Otherworlds, that we may hear and be heard by the Kindreds!**

**Mighty mac Lir, accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest pours oil on the Fire.*

*The People sing:*

**Gatekeeper, open the Portals  
Between the Gods and mortals!  
Power freely flows  
As our magic grows!  
--by Sue Parker**

*They all begin to chant:*

**Open the Gates! Open the Gates! Open the Gates!**

*The Priest starts spinning in a circle, counterclockwise, holding his staff, wand, or finger in the air, saying:*

**Let the Well open as a Gate! Let the Fire open as a Gate! Let the Tree connect the Worlds!  
*Osclaítear na geataí!* Let the Gates be Opened!**

*The People say:*

**Let the Gates be opened!**

*The Priest says:*

**We are now woven into the fabric of the Cosmos. The Kindreds may hear our thoughts and know our hearts, so let there be only truth here.**

*The Priest continues:*

**Let us now make our sacrifices to the Kindreds, that they may join us here and lend us their Power as well.**

*The Priest offers beer to the Ancestors.*

**We call to our Ancestors, those of Blood, who gave us life.  
We call to those of Heart, whom we have loved and lost.  
We also call to those of Spirit, those Ancient Wise of fame and skill who aid us in our ways.**

**Ancient Ones! Come to us and join us here this day! Stand behind us and whisper wisdom in our ears, that we may do what needs to be done.**

**Ancestors, accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest pours beer on the ground.*

*The Priest takes a bowl of seeds, nuts and fruit and says:*

**We call to the Spirits of the Land, those Spirits who share this world with us.  
We call to the Spirits of Motion, You who crawl, swim, run or fly.  
We call to the Spirits of Place, You rocks, trees and plants.  
We call to our Spirit Allies, who join us in our work.**

**Land Spirits! Come to us and join us here this day! Let us keep the old bargain, that all may thrive in our warm friendship.**

**Land Spirits! Accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest scatters the seeds, nuts and fruit.*

*The Priest takes whiskey and says:*

**We call to the Gods and Goddesses of all our Peoples!  
We call to the Gods in the Heavens, shining in the skies.  
We call to the Gods in the Midworld, striding across the Land.  
We call to the Gods in the Underworld, guiding and guarding our Dead.**

**Shining Ones! Come to us and join us here this day!  
Let the light of our Fire guide You to us that we may bask in Your beauty.**

**Shining and Chthonic Ones! Accept our sacrifice!**

*The Priest pours the whiskey into the Fire.*

*The Priest says:*

**Close your eyes, Children of Earth. See our Ancestors as they approach us. Feel the curious stares of the Spirits of the Land as they arrive. Feel the strength and power of the Gods and Goddesses as they join us here.**

**Mighty Kindreds, we welcome you.**

*The Priest asks the soldier to join him and they take good red wine and dark chocolate to the Fire.  
The Priest says:*

**Dread Lady! Battle Crow!  
Your presence brings fear to the hearts of men.  
Washer at the ford!  
None can escape Your attentions.  
Transforming Goddess!  
Armies quail in Your gaze.**

**Mighty Morrighan!  
Your child (Name) stands here**

**Full of courage and strong of heart.  
He brings You gifts!  
Wine, strong and red,  
Chocolate, strong and dark.**

**Turn Your face away from him, we pray!  
Wash not his armor at the ford!  
Keep him from the raven's beak,  
Save him from the carrion crows.  
Let him fight with valor  
And return home a hero.**

**Mighty Morrighan! Accept our sacrifice!**

*The soldier pours the wine around the Fire and gives the chocolate to the flames.*

*The Priest says:*

**Close your eyes, Children of Earth.  
She is here, we can feel Her.  
Avert your eyes from Her gaze –  
Give Her your respect and humility –  
Thank Her for joining us here.**

*(pause)*

**Morrighan, we welcome you.**

*The soldier then brings his offering for Cu Chulainn to the Fire. This offering should be something personal, something that speaks of the soldier's life and why the Demi-god should ally with him. Other possible offerings might include a wooden carving of a hound, a small keg of good beer, a joint of cooked pork, etc.*

*The Priest says:*

**Ulster's hope! Connacht's bane!  
No man can stand against You.  
Hound of Chulann!  
Your battle fury burns like the sun.  
Student of Scathach!  
Only pure hearts can turn aside your wrath.**

*The Soldier says:*

**Killer of Cu Roi,  
Champion Portions are Yours!  
Hound of Ulster!  
Guide me with Your might.  
Defeater of armies!  
Guard me with Your sword.**

*The Priest says:*

**Mighty Cu Chulainn  
Join us here, we pray.  
Cast Your cloak about him,**

**Guard his heart,  
Allow him compassion,  
And grant him the warriors' wisdom.**

**Mighty Cu Chulainn! Accept our sacrifice!**

*The Soldier makes his offering to the Fire.*

*The Priest says:*

**Close your eyes, Children of Earth.  
You can hear His sword as it slaps against His leg.  
You can feel His ferocity flowing outwards from Him.  
And you can see the warrior's gleam, glowing in His eyes.**

*(pause)*

**Cu Chulainn, we welcome you.**

*An Omen is taken.*

*The Priest elevates the cup and says:*

**Mighty Kindreds! Great Allies! Give us the strength we will need to do this deed. Grant us the Blessings of all the Worlds! Fill us with Your love, Your caring, and Your joy that we might be the key to protection and glory. Fill us, we pray!**

*The Priest raises the cup and says:*

**Kindreds! Hallow these Waters! Grant that we may be filled with all Your wondrous possibilities! Grant that we may succeed at our magic! Grant that our alliance shall work protection for this man.**

*The Priest exhales and slowly lowers the cup, saying:*

**Behold, the Waters of Life.**

*The Priest says:*

**Drink, Children of Earth. Drink of the Blessings of the Gods. Drink of the Blessings of all the Kindreds. Know that these blessings will give us what we need to protect our friend. Drink, and be happy!**

*All drink of the blessings, reserving some for the Working.*

*The Priest says:*

**We are now as powerful as we will ever be. Let us do this thing.**

*The Priest picks up the Soldier's talisman from the altar.*

**They are here, all of Them. See Them in your mind's eye. Feel Their power. Hear Their determined breathing. There is expectancy in the air.**

**Children of Earth, remember the Powers of Earth and Sky flowing through you. Feel them moving easily through your bodies. This is the stuff that magic is made of, and that we will use to charge this talisman.**

*The Priest takes up the Cup holding the remains of the Waters of Life and places it in the hands of the Soldier, who kneels on the ground near the Fire. The Priest leads the People in quietly intoning as one by one, the People attending take the talisman and hold it near their hearts, filling it with love, strength, and good-will.*

*When this is done and all have charged the talisman, the Priest takes it and hold it high, saying:*

**Keep intoning, Children of Earth!**

**We have filled this token with our love, strength and good-will.**

*The Priest then lowers the talisman into the Cup, and says:*

**Children of Earth! Let the Waters of the Earth flow through you and into this Cup! Let the Fires of the Heavens flow through you and into this Cup! Sing your power! Sing the Powers of the Cosmos into the talisman!**

**Mighty Kindreds! Aid us! Fill us! Direct this Power!**

*The People put their hands on the Soldier, who is holding the Cup and talisman, as they intone, strongly, vibrantly, and intently.*

*When the work is done, the Priest leads the People in bringing down the intonations.*

*The Soldier stands, the Priest pours out the contents of the Cup, and takes the talisman in his hands, saying:*

**(Name), this talisman has been blessed by the Kindreds and charged with the Powers of the Cosmos. Wear this next to your skin whenever possible, that the Gods may protect you and bring you safely home.**

*The Priest places the talisman over the Soldier's head, that he might wear it.*

*The Priest gives the soldier a hug, and takes him to his seat.*

*The Priest then says:*

**Morrighan, Cu Chulainn, we are so grateful to you. When we feel Your power our respect and love for You grows exponentially. Our wonder makes our eyes grow wide, and our joy is blinding!**

**Mighty Kindreds, all of You who have aided us this day, we say,  
Go raigh maith agaibh. We thank You.**

*The Priest stands and starts the chant, spinning clockwise, his staff, wand or finger pointing into the air:*

**Close the Gates, Close the Gates, Close the Gates!**

**Let the Fire be flame, let the Well be water, let the Tree return to the Midworld.  
Dúntar na geataí – Let the Gates be closed!**

**Earth Mother, once again You have upheld us in our work. Teach us to help You, teach us to heal You.**

**Earth Mother, go raigh maith agat! We thank You!**

*The Priest gathers everyone in a circle, holding hands. The Priest says:*

**Walk with joy, Children of Earth, this rite of protection is ended. Come and give (Name) a big hug!**

*After the hugs are done, the Priest rings the bell three times three.*

**Question #8 (Optional): If any of the rituals submitted for questions 4-7 have been performed, provide a brief description and analysis of the ritual performance. (no minimum word count)**

I have performed three of these rituals in the past: the Welsh Handfasting, the Rite of Healing, and the Rite of Protection for a Soldier Off to War.

### **Welsh Handfasting Rite**

I have done this many times, both as a wedding (signing the wedding certificate) and as a Handfasting (where the couple had been married previously). I have also adapted this for use in a Norse hearth culture, though I've not performed it this way as of yet.

I find that people really like this rite. It's fairly simple and doesn't last long (unless it is placed in the workings section of a full rite). Interestingly enough, while I have performed it both ways, most folks like to have it surrounded by a full ADF rite – I'm not sure why.

The couple being married don't have a lot to do, which they like, I suspect, though I do insist that they write their own vows (I refuse to accept default vows – I believe that too many people in today's world assume the defaults and never seriously examine them).

### **The Rite of Healing**

This started out as an outline for a ritual I performed for the Magic 2 course in the CTP, but it worked out so well that I have added it to my usual portfolio of rites I do. I prefer to do this as two rites, but I've noticed that I still get good results when it is combined together in one rite. The currents we access through the 2 Powers meditation are incredibly powerful, especially when Gods are invoked to help out. And by adding intoning into the mix, with the help of any attendees, things really get moving.

I first added intoning at the pair of healing rites I did for Flip Rutledge in the spring of 2009. I found that it really helped me focus the power that the Gods were feeding him through me, and I could definitely feel all the power They were feeding through the attendees, all intoning, who in turn were sending it on to me. I just vibrated with the power.

### **Protection for a Soldier Off to War**

This ritual was based on one I led during a Sonoran Sunrise Grove blessing rite many years ago for one of our members who was about to be transferred to Kuwait during the Iraq War. While we were hopeful that he wouldn't be sent to the front lines, there were no guarantees, so we did this anyway.

He brought a Thor's Hammer on a leather cord to the rite, and that is what we used for his talisman. It was a very moving ritual, full of love and support, and he wore that talisman the entire time he was over there. He never had to go to Iraq, staying in Kuwait, and came home unwounded.

So I consider the rite to have been a success.

## **Works Cited**

Grimes, Ronald L. *Deeply Into the Bone: Re-inventing Rites of Passage*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 2000. ISBN 978-0-23675-2.