

## **Rite of the Equinox of Autumn, and Invitation to Demeter (Designed Especially for Solitaries)**

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### Journal entry:

I decided dawn would be a magical time to do the rite in the woods, but more importantly it would be a quiet and surreptitious time. I was technically on someone else's land (probably belongs to the city), and it's difficult to explain my religion to Japanese who don't speak English. So, to avoid any chance of meeting someone, I decided early morning would be wise. However, quite unexpectedly at 6 a.m., after I had already set up my altar in the woods, but luckily just before I started the ritual proper, I heard a car door slam. I was in the woods, but not far from the road. Who could it be? I'd never seen another living soul in this area. Did someone see my bike near the road, and come to investigate? Quietly I sneaked through the brush and saw an old man tramping around looking for edible mushrooms. He hadn't seen me yet. I wondered what to do. Should I hide until he leaves? Finally, I called out in Japanese, "Good morning!" He knew I was a local English teacher, and greeted me warmly. I acted like I was just out for a walk, and tramped around picking up trash, waiting for him to leave. But he found my altar. I wasn't sure what he would say. He just smiled and said in English, "Very fine! Very fine!"

After about an hour he left and I began the rite. I invited Demeter in as my guest at a feast. For the great sacrifice, I offered ham, grain, a bakchoi (bundle of twigs and flowers), and last a chant of some 56 names, titles, and epithets of Demeter. When I came to the omen, I got an un-ambiguously positive result from the Haindl Tarot: 6 of Cups—Happiness.

### Notes:

\*This rite uses a liturgical format designed for solitaries learning the Order of Ritual. All invocations, offerings, thanks, and so forth follow set formulae. This is to aid memorization, which can be daunting for a beginning solitary who must perform all parts. Further, the "Now let us..." portions attempt to link the main OoR points together in a fairly logical flow, to aid recall.

\*Somewhat unconventionally, nature spirits are used for the gatekeeper and inspirer (the specific spirits used were chosen for personal reasons).

\*Although solitary rites typically use the first person singular, the plural form ("we" and "us") is used here in recognition of the many land spirits, allies, and other kindred that simultaneously participate—a solitary is never truly alone.

\*Bold portions are section heads, they are not spoken. All else is spoken. Italics are chanted.

## **I. First Honors and Establishing the Grove**

### **Chant of the Title**

*Hail Kindreds!*

*This is the rite of the high holy day,*

*The Equinox of Autumn,*

*Kept today as long ago.*

### **Honoring the Earth Mother and Formal Beginning of the Rite**

Let the rite begin.

*May the first and final honors of all rites,*

*Be always for the Earth.*

*Offerings be to the Earth Mother*

*Hail, Earth Mother! Hail!*

### **First Calling of Purpose and Precedent**

Now let us call a first time the Kindreds, to make our purpose known:

A first time we call  
To the Three Kindreds in all the worlds:  
*This is the rite of the high holy day,  
The Equinox of Autumn,  
Kept today as long ago.*  
In this rite may all Kindreds be honored,  
And may high honor be to Demeter,  
Whom we invite to feast with us today.

### **Offering to the Outdwellers**

Now let us give thanks and bid farewell to all those Kindred who might work against this purpose.

To all who stand against this rite, (/way,)  
Take this and make no trouble tonight! (/today!)

### **Establishing the Grove in Ground and Center**

Now let us ground and center our Grove.

Roots reaching down  
To the Waters of Earth below,  
Water flowing up to the Sacred Center;  
Branches reaching up  
To the Fires of Heaven above,  
Fire flowing down to the Sacred Center.

May this Grove be well-established  
In the world beheld in three:  
The Land beneath, the Sky above,  
And all around the Sea.

Behold the Sacred Center!

### **Establishing the Grove in the Gates of Fire, Well, and Tree**

Now let us attune our Grove to the Gates of the Sacred Center.

Sacred Fire, carry this rite to the worlds above.  
Sacred Well, carry this rite to the world below.  
Sacred Tree, bear witness to this rite in all the worlds.

### **Inviting the Gatekeeper**

Now let us invite the Gatekeeper to be with us. The Gatekeeper of this rite is the Fox.

*Offerings be to the Fox.  
Hail, Fox! Hail!*

Gatekeeper Fox,  
With this prayer,  
We ask but that you remember us,  
For now we need your help.  
Be with us in this Grove.

### **Opening the Gates**

Now let us ask the Gatekeeper to join with our might, and open the Gates of the Sacred Center, that our voices may carry to the Three Kindreds in all the worlds.

Gatekeeper Fox,  
Let the Gate of the Fire be opened!  
Let the Gate of the Well be opened!  
Let the Gate of the Tree be opened!  
And as they open,  
Let our eyes and ears and hearts be opened evermore!

Gatekeeper Fox,  
May you guard these Gates for us until the rite is over.

### **Inviting the Inspirer**

Now by the Gates our voices carry to the Three Kindreds in all the worlds. Let us invite the Inspirer to help us use this power wisely. The Inspirer of this rite is the Shadow.

*Offerings be to the Shadow.*  
*Hail, Shadow! Hail!*

Inspirer Shadow,  
With this prayer,  
We ask but that you remember us,  
For now we need your help.  
Be with us in this Grove.

Inspirer Shadow,  
May you guide us with your Inspiration until the rite is over.

### **Honoring the Three Kindreds**

Now by the Gates, and with Inspiration, let us give honor to the Three Kindreds in all the worlds.

*Offerings be to the Nature Spirits.*  
*Hail, Nature Spirits! Hail!*

*Offerings be to the Ancestors.*  
*Hail, Ancestors! Hail!*

*Offerings be the Gods and Goddesses.*  
*Hail, Gods and Goddesses! Hail!*

### **Inviting the Kindred of the High Holy Day**

Now by the Gates, and with Inspiration, let us give high honor to the Kindred of the Equinox of Autumn, the Approachable in Prayer Demeter, by invoking her to preside over this rite.

*Offerings be to Demeter!*  
*Hail, Demeter! Hail!*

Approachable in Prayer Demeter,  
With this prayer,  
We ask but that you remember us,  
For now we need your help.

Be with us in this Grove.

May you preside in high honor over this rite!

## **II. The Rite of The Great Sacrifice**

### **Summation of the Grove Established**

Now the Grove is well-established  
In Land, Sky, and Sea,  
In Fire, Well, and Tree,  
And in the Kindreds Three.

Let the work of this rite begin.

### **Second Calling of Purpose and Precedent**

Now let us call a second time to the Kindreds, to work our rite.

A second time we call  
To the Three Kindreds in all the worlds:  
*This is the rite of the high holy day,  
The Equinox of Autumn,  
Kept today as long ago.*  
In this rite may all Kindreds be honored,  
And may high honor be to Demeter,  
Whom we invite to feast with us today.

### **Statement of the Work of the Rite**

Now let us state the Work of this Rite.

O Demeter, we have invited you here  
To be our guest in a feast in your honor  
To receive our gifts and praise  
Offered in recognition of the many you have offered us.  
We repay our debts to you,  
And we reach out to you,  
That a bond of ghosti may form between us.  
See now our gifts for you,  
And hear the praise we offer!

### **Presentation of the Offerings**

Now let us present the offerings of the Great Sacrifice.

To the Approachable in Prayer Demeter,  
We present the Great Sacrifice  
Of the High Holy Day:

A ham, in recognition of the piglets received by you at the Eleusinian Rites of old.

To the Approachable in Prayer Demeter,  
We present the Great Sacrifice  
Of the High Holy Day:

A bundle of branches, in recognition of the bakchoi bundles waved for you in the Iacchos processions of old.

To the Approachable in Prayer Demeter,  
We present the Great Sacrifice  
Of the High Holy Day:

Grain, in recognition of the fertile gifts you bestow upon us year after year.

To the Approachable in Prayer Demeter,  
We present the Great Sacrifice  
Of the High Holy Day:

A recitation of your many titles and epithets, in recognition of your great power, mystery, beneficence, and popularity. May you find it pleasing to your ears!

*Hail, Kindreds! This is the Chant of the Virtues of Demeter.<sup>1</sup>*

*O Demeter, you who are called Demo,  
O Demeter, you who are called Deo,  
O Demeter, you who are called Demeter Calligeneia,  
Hear of your countless virtues!*

*O Demeter, Great is your power!  
O Demeter, you are the Great Goddess  
O Demeter, you are the Great Mother  
O Demeter, you are the Woman  
O Demeter, you are the Mistress  
O Demeter, you are the Patron  
O Demeter, you are the Lady  
O Demeter, you are the Queen  
O Demeter, you are Queen Amongst Goddesses  
O Demeter, you are Glorious Goddess  
O Demeter, you are the Holy  
O Demeter, you are the Pure  
O Demeter, you are Approachable in Prayer*

*O Demeter, Great is your mystery!  
O Demeter, you are of the Opened Earth  
O Demeter, you are the Black  
O Demeter, you are the Terrifying  
O Demeter, you are the Fury  
O Demeter, you are the Purifying  
O Demeter, you are the Dark Veiled*

*O Demeter, Great is your Beneficence!  
O Demeter, you are the Bringer of Laws  
O Demeter, you are the Goddess of Mills  
O Demeter, you are of Warmth  
O Demeter, you are of the Earth  
O Demeter, you are of the Furrows  
O Demeter, you are of the Golden Sword  
O Demeter, you are the Blooming  
O Demeter, you are the Bearer of Fruit  
O Demeter, you are the Giver of Corn*

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<sup>1</sup> Translations of attested titles and epithets from [www.theoi.com](http://www.theoi.com)

*O Demeter, you are the Giver of Wealth  
O Demeter, you are the Sender of Gifts  
O Demeter, you are the Bountiful  
O Demeter, you are the Bringer of the Seasons  
O Demeter, you are the Beautiful Ankled  
O Demeter, you are the Beautiful Crowned  
O Demeter, you are the Lovely Crowned  
O Demeter, you are the Lovely Haired  
O Demeter, you are the Golden Haired  
O Demeter, you are the Bright Goddess  
O Demeter, you are the Daughter of Rich-Haired Rhea*

*O Demeter, Great is your popularity!  
O Demeter of Achaea  
O Demeter of All the Achaeans  
O Demeter of the Amphictyons  
O Demeter of Eleusis  
O Demeter of Europe  
O Demeter of the Headland  
O Demeter of Herkyna  
O Demeter of the Kabeiroi  
O Demeter of Lernaia  
O Demeter of the Musaion  
O Demeter of Mycalessia  
O Demeter of the Rharian Plain  
O Demeter of Stiris  
O Demeter of Telphussion  
O Demeter of Obira*

O Demeter, these are your countless virtues!

### **Sending the Great Sacrifice of the High Holy Day**

Now the offerings have been presented. Let us offer up the Great Sacrifice of the High Holy Day, singing the song of our desire, and send forth our Sacrifice in one final hail.

Offering Song (words by Anthony R. Thompson, music by Ian Corrigan)

*Let our voices arise on the Fire,  
Let our voices resound in the Deep,  
May the spirits accept what we offer,  
As we honor the old ways we keep. (x3)*

By Land, Sky, and Sea,  
By Fire, Well, and Tree,  
And by the Kindreds Three:  
Accept our Sacrifice!

Hail!

### **Omen Regarding the Great Sacrifice**

Now let us consult the omens regarding our Sacrifice.

The omen is woeful.  
Let us offer further Sacrifices.

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The omen is well!  
Praise be to the Kindreds!  
Their blessings be upon us!

### **Receiving the Blessings of the Kindreds**

Now let us receive the blessings in the form of the Waters of Life.

O Kindreds,  
We praise you and receive your blessings.  
Hallow these waters and give to us:  
Health, Wealth, and Wisdom!  
Grant us also these blessings we ask in our hearts.  
(silent petition)

O Kindreds,  
Thy blessings be upon us!  
Let them come into these waters,  
That we may drink them down.

Behold the Waters of Life!

We give thanks.

### **III. Thanksgiving and Final Honors**

#### **Summation of the Work Completed**

Now the work of this rite is well-established  
In Land, Sky, and Sea,  
The Fire, Well, and Tree,  
And in the Kindreds Three.  
Let the work of this rite draw to a close.

#### **Third Calling of Purpose and Precedent**

Now let us call a third and final time to the Kindreds, to give our thanks.

A third time we call  
To the Three Kindreds in all the worlds:  
*This is the rite of the high holy day,  
The Equinox of Autumn,  
Kept today as long ago.*  
In this rite may all Kindreds be honored,  
And may high honor be to Demeter,  
Whom we invite to feast with us today.

#### **Thanking and Bidding Farewell to the Kindred of the High Holy Day**

Now let us give thanks and bid farewell to the Kindred of the High Holy Day, the Approachable in Prayer Demeter, who has presided in high honor over this rite.

Approachable in Prayer Demeter,  
With this prayer,  
We ask but that you remember us,

When next we need your help.  
Thank you being with us in this Grove.

Stay if you will, go if you must.  
Thanks be to Demeter.

### **Thanking the Three Kindreds**

Now by the Gates, and with Inspiration, let us give thanks to the Three Kindreds in all the worlds.

Let us give thanks to the Nature Spirits.  
Thanks be to the Nature Spirits!

Let us give thanks to the Ancestors.  
Thanks be to the Ancestors!

Let us give thanks to the Gods and Goddesses!  
Thanks be to the Gods and Goddesses!

### **Thanking and Bidding Farewell to the Inspirer**

Now let us give thanks and bid farewell to the Inspirer Shadow.

Inspirer Shadow,  
With this prayer,  
We ask but that you remember us  
When next we need your help.

Stay if you will, go if you must.  
Thanks be to the Shadow.

### **Closing the Gates of the Sacred Center**

Now let us ask the Gatekeeper Fox to join with our might, and close the Gates of the Sacred Center.

Gatekeeper Fox,  
Let the Gate of the Fire be closed.  
Let the Gate of the Well be closed.  
Let the Gate of the Tree be closed.  
And as they close,  
Let our eyes and ears and hearts be opened evermore.

### **Thanking and Bidding Farewell to the Gatekeeper**

Now let us thank and bid farewell to the Gatekeeper Fox.

Gatekeeper Fox,  
With this prayer,  
We ask but that you remember us  
When next we need your help.

Stay if you will, go if you must.  
Thanks be to the Fox.

### **Renewing the Grove in Ground and Center**

Now let us once more ground and center our Grove.

Roots reaching down



To the Waters of Earth below,  
Water flowing up to the Sacred Center;  
Branches reaching up  
To the Fires of Heaven above,  
Fire flowing down to the Sacred Center.

May this Grove go well-established  
In the world beheld in three:  
The Land beneath, the Sky above,  
And all around the Sea.

Go in the peace of the Sacred Center!

### **Honoring the Earth Mother and Formal Ending of the Rite**

*May the first and final honors of all rites,  
Be always for the Earth.*

*Offerings be to the Earth Mother  
Hail, Earth Mother! Hail!*

The rite is ended.

Go in peace.

#### **(After the Rite:)**

O Earth Mother,  
One day we shall we return unto you.  
Even so, today does this portion of your bounty.



my Bakchoi bundle offering, as inspired by those waved by ancients during the Iacchos procession returning sacred items from Athens to Eleusis during the Eleusinian rites.