

Solitary COOR Ritual
David Fickett-Wilbar (Ceisiwr Serith)

This ritual was written to be one that roughly followed the ADF Core Order of Ritual (except for the Earth Mother, which is replaced here by the spirits of the home), that was both simple and intricate, and that was short enough to be performed regularly, perhaps once a week. Its primary functions are to put one in connection and accord with the Cosmos and the Kindreds, to be empowered by the Waters of Life, and to receive advice from the Kindreds by divination. It can be used to work on relationships with particular members or categories of the Kindreds, putting this after the invocations of the Kindreds, or for other workings (such as healings), putting them after the consumption of the Waters, either to replace the meditation or after it. Because it is stripped down to the basics, it is flexible enough to serve as the basis for just about anything.

My intent was to put emphasis not on just the words, but on space and movement. Because of this, I've filmed a performance of the ritual and posted it on line at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnustkF7o5t8zwoKnwLXx7iazRooUUsIZ>. A version of this script with a commentary is on my website, at <http://ceisiwrserith.com/ritual/practice/adfrituals/druidsolitary.htm>.

Table:

(East)

A		I J K
B	C D	
E F		
G H		L

On the floor:

(to left of table)

M

N O

(at center of table)

P (under overhang)

(on right of table)

Q

- A: Libation bowl
- B: Waters bowl
- C: Oil lamp or candle on a stand
- D: Bowl of water (touching lamp stand)
- E: Manannán bowl
- F: Cernunnos bowl
- G: House spirits bowl
- H: Bell
- I: Deities stone
- J: Ancestors stone
- K: Nature Spirits stone
- L: Bowl or dish for ladle Pitcher of Waters
- M: Ladle
- N: Pitcher of Waters
- O: Pitcher of milk
- P: Matches
- Q: Runes

These rules of design are: 1. up is more sacred than down, 2. right is more sacred than left, 3. inside is more sacred than outside, 4. east is more sacred than west, 5. vertical is more sacred than horizontal, 6. contact creates connections, and 7. fire is the means by which the sacred and the mundane cross over into each other.

The table top is organized into the left, mundane, space; the right, sacred, space; and a liminal zone between the two marked out by the width of the lamp stand. The portion of the liminal zone between the front edge of the board and the lamp is where most of the ritual acts will take place, and is therefore called the “ritual zone.” The table is placed so that the ritualist is facing east, the Indo-European sacred direction.

Materially-speaking, the drink used for the Waters should have consciousness-changing qualities. Alcohol is the most Indo-European, but distilled liquor, unless diluted, shouldn't be used; too much is drunk during the ritual. Instead, use beer, wine, or mead. If you want something non-alcoholic, cool tea works well. I suppose even an energy drink could be used. I myself use ginger beer.

Alternatively, a honey-water mix (about a tablespoon per cup) is nice. There is nothing specifically psychoactive about it (although there can be a bit of a sugar rush), but it can be seen as a pre-fermented mead.

If your patron deity is similarly a gatekeeper, you will want to call to them first as themselves, and then pray to them to open the gate. If your patron is *not* a gatekeeper, you may either open the gate first, followed immediately by your patron, on the principle that they come just like the other Kindreds, but that as the one connected to you so closely they will come first. Or you can call to them *before* you open the gates, on the principle that they are already close to you and that they will help to call the gatekeeper in turn. You could make this explicit, asking your patron to do just that.

I have written some of the gatekeeper prayer – “disperse the mists, conjoin the disparate” – to align with my two gatekeepers. You will want to rewrite these prayers if you have a different gatekeeper. For instance, if your gatekeeper is Agni, “be my priest, conveying my offerings.”

!. Establishing Sacred Time and Space

Kneel in front of the table. Take a few slow breaths to calm yourself. Pick up the bell with your right hand and ring it three times. Transfer it to your left hand and put it on the floor to the left of the table, in front of the Waters pitcher.

Pick up the bowl of water. Purify yourself. You can use whatever form of purification you are used to. I do this:

May I be pure that I might cross through the sacred. (Anoint forehead.)
May I cross through the sacred that I might attain the holy. (Anoint lips.)
May I attain the holy that I might be blessed in all things. (Anoint left hand.)

Put the bowl down on the floor on your right.

Move the house spirits bowl into the ritual zone. Pick up the milk pitcher and pour the milk into the bowl:

I offer milk to the spirits of my home
in return for their protection and blessings.

Put the milk pitcher on floor on the right side of the table. Touch the bowl of milk to the lamp, then move it over the lamp and place it on the eastern side. Light the oil lamp, putting the extinguished match in the ladle dish:

In the world's very center I light my fire,
here where the sacred and the mundane meet
Here I light a living flame,
though which my offerings will be transformed
that they might be received by the Kindreds
and secure for me their blessings.

Bring your hands to in front of you, touching and slightly cupped. Raise them in a semi-circle with both your hands, singing:

The waters support and surround me.

Put your hands in the middle of the top of the semi-circle, palms downward, and bring them out to the ends of the semi-circle, singing:

The land extends about me.

Make another semi-circle upwards from the edge of the other one, with your hands meeting at its top, singing:

The sky stretches out above me.

Hold both your hands, palms down and touching, out towards the fire, and then bring them in to touch your heart, singing:

At the center burns a living flame.

Move your hands into the orans position, singing:

May all the Kindreds bless us.

May my worship be true.

May my actions be just.

May my love be pure.

Blessings, and honor, and worship to the Holy Ones.

Stretch your hands out to your side as horizontally as possible, sit up as straight as you can, and say:

I sit in the center of the Cosmos.

II. Invoking the Kindreds and Opening the Gate

Invoke Cernunnos:

Come to me, Cernunnos,
Inspirer of speech,
Come to me, Cernunnos,
Inspirer of prayer,
Come to me, come to me, Lord Cernunnos.

Come to me, Cernunnos,
God of the in-between,
Come to me, Cernunnos,
God of this and that,
Come to me, come to me, Lord Cernunnos.

Come to me, Cernunnos,
Who sits in the door,
Come to me, Cernunnos,
Who opens the gate,
Come to me, come to me, Lord Cernunnos,
Come to the one who worships you here.

With the first verse, pour some of the Waters into the Cernunnos bowl and then put pitcher down in front of you on the floor. With the second, touch it to the oil lamp. With the third, put it on right side of the ritual zone, touching the lamp stand.

Pause, and then say:

From tearing ocean into welcoming bay,
Come homeward, Sailor, on silver keel.
Cross beacon-guided the shattering shoal,
and gently come, and joyful stay.

From tearing ocean into welcoming bay,
past guardian jetty guide your boat,
and tie its rope to pillared pier,
and gently come, and joyful stay.

From tearing into welcoming bay,
set foot on land with blessing touch,
and enter home, and sit at hearth.
Come homeward, Sailor; come Son of Sea:
O gently come, o joyful stay.

With the first verse, pour some of the Waters into the Manannán bowl and then put pitcher down in front of you on the floor. With the second, touch it to oil lamp. With the third, put it on right side of the ritual zone, touching the lamp stand.

Hold a hand over each of these two bowls, crossing them, left over right, so that your right hand is over the left bowl and vice versa. Say:

Cernunnos, Manannán, open the way;
Manannán, Cernunnos, open the way:
Disperse the mists
Conjoin the disparate.
Through an opened gate
may my words flow;
Through an opened gate
may my blessings flow;
Through an opened gate,
may the words,
may the blessings,
of the Kindreds freely flow.
Open the way, Manannán and Cernunnos.
Open the way, Cernunnos and Manannán,
Open the way, open the way, open the way.
The gate is open!

During the next to last line, bring your hands out and up in a sign of opening, ending in the orans position.

Bring your hands inwards to touch chest.

I invite the Kindreds to join me here today.

Move the Waters bowl into the ritual zone, touching the Cernunnos and Manannán bowls.

Pick up the pitcher of the Waters and pour some into the Waters bowl:

Nature Spirits, with the pouring of this libation I invite you here.

Put the pitcher back down on the floor in front of you and pick up the Nature Spirits stone. Touch it to the lamp and then place it on the left of the front of the ritual zone :

Watching Ones, may your blessings be with me today.

Pick up the pitcher of the Waters and pour some into the Waters bowl:

Ancestors, with the pouring of this libation I invite you here.

Put the pitcher back down on the floor in front of you and pick up the Ancestor stone. Touch it to the lamp and then place it in the center of the front of the ritual zone:

Mighty Ones, may your power be with me today.

Pick up the pitcher of the Waters and pour the remainder into the Waters bowl:

Gods and Goddesses, with the pouring of this libation I invite you here.

Put the pitcher back down on the floor in front of you and pick up the deities stone. Touch it to the lamp and then place it on the right of the front of the ritual zone:

Shining Ones, may your wisdom be with me today.

Put the pitcher back down on the floor in front of you. Hold the Waters bowl over the flame:

Lovely Ones, with these libations, I invite you all to join me here today.

Move Waters bowl to the right of the table, touching the lamp stand.
Put hands in orans position:

Called to my presence with prayers and libations,
the Kindreds are here, with blessings and friendship.
Welcome to the Kindreds, to the Kindreds all,
with blessings, with honor, with worship.

III. Receiving the Gifts of the Kindreds.

Move the milk pitcher to the right of the table, in front of the milk pitcher . Pick up the runes, touch them to the oil lamp. Say:

Wisest Ones,
whose knowledge of the Xártus is true,
send me your teaching.

Divine, placing the rune(s) to interpret in the space between the Kindreds stones and the Gatekeepers bowls, and returning the rest of them to their place. After interpreting, move the interpreted rune(s) to the left side of the table, where the house spirits bowl had been:

I hear what the Kindreds have said
and am made wise by it

Hold the Waters bowl about three inches over the flame a moment:

Through the offerings I have made
I have established the bonds of hospitality with the Kindreds,
and in return they have given me this blazing water to drink,
this holy water,
this sacred water

Lift the bowl to eye level:

these Waters of Life.

Put the Waters bowl down between the Kindreds stones and the Gatekeepers bowls, not touching any of them. Bring the libation bowl into the ritual zone, to the right of the Waters bowl and touching it. Pick up the ladle in your right hand and dip it three times in the water in the purification bowl. Then ladle some of the Waters into the Waters bowl in three parts:

May the Kindreds always receive their due.

Put the ladle onto its dish. Hold the libation bowl over the flame a moment, and then move it to the right of the lamp, touching the lamp stand.

Lift the Waters bowl and say:

and may I receive inspiration.
May I receive power.
May I receive unending life.

Drink the Waters, once with each line, leaving about a third behind. Put the Waters bowl down in the same position it was in. Sit back:

I rest myself in the presence of the Kindreds.

Meditate a while. Then open arms:

With the Kindreds about me
With the power of their mystery within
I pray for the world and all in it.
May the blessings granted to me extend to them as well.
May they be happy and whole.
May they be loved and lively.
And may they dwell in peace,
wrapped in the arms of the Kindreds.
Gods and Goddesses,
Ancestors:
Nature Spirits,
I pray to you on their behalf.

During “May the blessings ...,” move the Waters bowl to immediately to the left of the lamp, but not touching the lamp stand. Touch the appropriate stone when each Kindred is named.

IV. Saying farewell to the Kindreds

Raise your hands into the orans position:

Blessed ones, may you always be with me.
I thank all the Kindreds for your many gifts.

Pick up the deity stone and touch it to the lamp:

Thank you, gods and goddesses,
for joining me today.
May there ever be peace between us in this world we share.

Put the deities stone down in its original place.

Pick up the Ancestor stone and touch it to the lamp:

Thank you, Ancestors,
for joining me today.
May there ever be peace between us in this world we share.

Put the Ancestors stone down in its original place.

Pick up the Nature Spirit stone and touch it to lamp:

Thank you, Nature Spirits,

for joining me today.
May there ever be peace between us in this world we share.

Put the Nature Spirit stone down in its original place.
Spread your hands into the orans position:

Thanks to the Kindreds, to the Kindreds all,
with blessings, with honor, with worship.

Hold out your hands, one over the Cernunnos bowl and one over the Manannán bowl, crossed as before:

Manannán, Cernunnos, you cleared the way
Cernunnos, Manannán, you opened the gate.
Close now the gate that I might end my rite.
May the Holy Ones be yet never far away
that they might come to me in my time of need.

With the line “May the Holy Ones ...” spread your hands into the orans position.
Pause, then bring your hands together:

Let the gate be closed.

Open your hands. Hold the right one over the Manannán bowl:

Manannán, I thank you for helping me today,
and ask that you continue to help me
by clearing the mists that divide me from the truth.

Hold the bowl over the flame a moment and then pour its contents into the libation bowl. Put the bowl down in front of and touching the libation bowl.
Hold your right hand over the Cernunnos bowl:

Cernunnos, I thank you for helping me today,
and ask that you continue to help me
by aiding me in seeing the patterns
and in communicating them to others.

Hold the bowl over the flame a moment and then pour its contents into the libation bowl. Put the bowl down to the right of and touching the Manannán and libation bowls.

V. Closing the Rite

Put your right hand behind the flame:

Extinguished without,

Blow the flame out. Bring your right hand to your chest:

but burning within,
the living fire flames within me.

Put your hands flat on your knees:

The rite is ended.

Ring the bell four times and put it in its original place on the table.

Drink the remainder of the Waters.

After the ritual, put the two libation bowls in your home shrine for at least a day and then dispose of them outside, saying, "To the spirits, the leavings."