

I STAND WITH TARA

A Ritual for the Preservation of the Tara-Skryne Valley

October 31st, 2007

Ritual Script

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For a detailed explanation of the terms and structures used in this ritual, please read [Tara Ritual - Pre-Ritual Briefing](#). If you are leading or co-leading this ritual for a group, we suggest that you have the participants also read the briefing or present the material to them in a pre-ritual discussion. This will also give you a chance to practice the Irish phrases we've used in the ritual. If you are skilled at improvising in ritual, you don't need to follow every bit of the English script word for word - we've written it so it can be used either literally or as a starting point for keyed improvisation. "RL" is the Ritual Leader. For individuals doing the ritual solo, this is you! Solitary workers can read all parts in sequence if they choose, or can merge the call and response sections.

Sections meant to be spoken are in **bold**, section headers are in larger text and underlined, Sub-sections are bulleted, and general instructions are in normal typeface.

Opening statement

RL Light candles or fire for illumination, or have assistant(s) do so while RL speaks.

RL: **We meet tonight on *Oíche Shamhna*** (phonetically: "EEH-yuh HOW-nuh"), **the holy night of Samhain. We meet to protect the Hill of Tara, and the Tara Skryne Valley. Tara, the home of the ancestors, the goddesses and gods, the home of the spirits. We meet to re-light the signal fires and share our strength and hope. *Fáilte*** (phonetically: "FAWLTCHE-yuh" English: "Welcome")

Initial Offerings

RL: **Tonight the ancestors are close at hand, right here with us, watching all we do. May they guide and help us in this work.** (offerings to Ancestors) **Ancestors, be welcome!**

All: **Ancestors, be welcome!**

RL: **Tonight, the Goddesses and Gods, the *Déithe* (phonetically: “JAY-huh”) of Ireland draw close, ready to help protect their sacred sites, the sacred center.** (Offerings to deities) ***Déithe* be welcome!**

All: ***Déithe* be welcome!**

RL: **The spirits of nature are all around us, ready to observe and aid our work. We ask their help in protecting the land, to keep it safe from harm.** (Offerings to land and nature spirits) **Spirits of the Land, be welcome!**

All: **Spirits of the Land, be welcome!**

RL: **Tonight, the Ancestors, Gods and Spirits draw close. We offer them our hospitality, and thank them for their friendship. *Sláinte Mhaith!*** (phonetically: “SLAWNTCH-yuh Vah”)

All: ***Sláinte Mhaith!***

Sacred Space

- Saining with fire, water, and/or breath:

RL quietly asks the blessing of fire from one of the candles, lights the juniper and sets it smoking, and uses the smoke to clear away any psychic detritus and create a good and holy setting for the work ahead. Ritual participants count nine breaths while this is going on, focusing on letting the cares of the day-to-day drop away, and settling into a calm and relaxed state to greet the spirits and encounter the Otherworld.

- Three Realms:

RL: **We open and connect with the Three Realms, sacred to the Ancient Celts and sacred to us now. They are the powers by which our ancestors swore their oaths, the powers that make up this world and the Otherworld:**
the earth: *talam* (phonetically: “TAH-luhv”),

the sky: *nem* (phonetically: “Nev”),
and the sea: *muir* (phonetically: “Mweer”).

The three realms are ever present, but as we connect with them more deeply, we open our awareness and move into sacred space. We call them now: “the blue sky, the beautiful sea, the present earth.” And as our ancestors did in Old Irish: “nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé”. (phonetically: “Nem nlas, Mweer mas, TAH-luhv kay”)

RL: *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé*

All: *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé* (or, shorted to just *talam cé* - “TAH-luhv kay”)

RL: **We stand on sacred ground, the sky above our heads; the sacred sea, whether near or far, surrounds us. *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé***

All: *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé*

RL: **Feel the earth beneath your feet, strong, deep, dark. Reach down and feel her strength joining with ours. This is a sacred time: Samhain, the time of the Ancestors. May the Ancestors be with us now, in peace, honor and cooperation. *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé***

All: *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé*

RL: **Feel the sky above our heads. Endless source of inspiration, home of the sun, moon and stars, source and center of all the winds. Reach up and feel the power of the sky, flowing down through us into the earth, beginning to join the realms within us. *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé***

All: *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé*

RL: **As we become aware of the sacred earth and sky blending within us, feel the blood in our bodies, the water in our cells. The water in our bodies links us to the primal sea, the source of all life. Out at the edges of the land, at the boundaries of the continent, we are surrounded by the eternal sea. The waters flow beneath the land, and we can pull their energy up from the earth into our bodies, and send it up to the sky, where it travels as clouds and rains down again to the sea, a circuit of energy in which we stand at the center. We are at the center of the worlds. *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé***

All: *Nem nglas, muir mas, talam cé*

- The Center

RL: When the three realms come together, in the center, we find the way to the Otherworld. In the center, the doorway opens, and expands out around us.

All: Chant **Aaaaaaaaah.... Tara....** (Chant for a while. When RL starts to speak you may continue chanting, if you like, but not so loudly as to drown out RL)

RL: The sacred center connects us to all places and all times. Tara is the sacred center, and we call to her now.

ALL: Chant **Tara....**

RL: See the center opening - the metaphysical center, overlapping with the physical and metaphysical Hill of Tara - the mystical center of Ireland, connecting all of us, all over the planet, who are doing this ritual together....

All: Chant **Tara....**

RL: (When feels connection is strong) Now, we are all connected, with Tara at the center.

All: (Continue chanting “**Tara....**” drawing out the syllables. If it turns into a wordless or freeform chant, that is fine. Continue until the chant dies down naturally or the Ritual Leader brings it to a close.)

RL: We have found the center, Tara Herself.

**Mighty hill of many names,
The pleasant hazel-wood, The fertile field of grain.
The hill of the sovereigns, The hill of the tribes.
We honor you, Druim Leith, Druim Cain,
Cathair Crofhind of the Tuatha Dé Danann,
Temair, rampart of Tea the Just.
Tara, Seat of Kings and Queens,
Tara, heart of the people.
Tara, heart of the land.**

**We light the signal fires of old, we rise to guard your borders.
We meet the rising dark with fire. Tara!**

ALL: **Tara!**

RL: *Sláinte Mhaith*. (phonetically: “SLAWNTCH-yuh Vah”)

ALL: *Sláinte Mhaith*

Introduce yourself: Threefold

RL: **I am _____ of _____, _____.** (lights candle or torch) **I stand with Tara.**

(Go around circle, ritually introducing selves. Each person in turn says the formula and lights their candle. If too windy or fire is not permitted, hold your hands before your heart and visualize the flame in your heart creating a flame that you cup in your hands.)

Individual: **I am _____ of _____, _____.** (lights candle, torch, or symbolic flame in hands) **I stand with Tara.**

(After all individuals have spoken)

RL: **We are _____** (name of group) _____

ALL: **We are _____** (name of group) _____

Lighting the Signal Fires for Tara

RL: From the time of the early ancestors, Tara has been the center. The center of the land, the ritual and mystical center of Ireland and her people. Before the holy Samhain rites, individual hearth fires were doused, and then re-lit from the ceremonial fire. Tara was the source and center of that sacred fire, and the healing, protection, and inspiration it conveys.

But in recent times, the fire has been doused and not re-lit. The center is threatened. Right now, even on this sacred night, bulldozers stand ready to destroy our heritage, the sacred center of the land, and the history of our people. The destruction has already begun. It is time for it to stop. We say “No more!”

Our ancestors took in the fire of the sacred center, and carried it in their hearts. Every one of us standing here tonight has a spark of that sacred fire within us. Tonight, we make the choice to build that fire again. Tonight, we will build the fire of protection, healing and holiness, and we will give it back to Tara, that she may once again become the sacred center: Protected, Inviolable, Preserved; Revitalized and Reborn, that she may once again send her power of healing and inspiration into the world.

Tonight, she needs us.

Tonight, instead of taking the flame from Tara, we build the fire and return it to her, lighting a sacred and blazing signal fire of love, pride, and protection.

We now light our signal-fire

(RL moves in towards flame)

RL: **We are** _____ (name of group) _____

ALL: **We stand with Tara.** (All light central fire from individual flames)

RL: **We are** _____ (name of group) _____

ALL: **We stand with Tara.**

RL: **We are** _____ (name of group) _____

ALL: **We stand with Tara.**

(As the following prayers and poetry to the spirits of the land, the ancestors, and the deities happen, see light from the central fire blazing up and sending power to Tara. Group can then chant, sing, drum, dance, whatever works best, all the while visualizing energy going to protect Tara and the Skryne Valley surrounding her, forming a boundary, keeping destruction out.)

Invoking the land of Ireland

**I invoke the land of Ireland,
Much-coursed be the fertile sea,
Fertile be the fruit-strewn mountain,
Fruit-strewn be the showery wood,
Showery be the river of waterfalls,
Of waterfalls be the lake of deep pools,
Deep-pooled be the hill-top wall,
A well of tribes be the assembly,
An assembly of the tribes be Tara,
Tara be the hill of the tribes,
The tribes of the descendents of Mil,
Of Mil of the ships, the barks!
Let the lofty bark be Ireland,
Lofty Ireland, darkly sung,**

*Ailiu iath nHerend
hermach muir, Mothach
mothach sliab, srathach
srathach caill, Cithach
cithach aub, essach
essach loch, lindmar
linmar tor, tipra
tipra túath, Oenach
oenach túath Temrach.
Temair tor tuathach
tuatha síol Miled
milid long libarn.
libard Herend.
Ere ard, diclass*

**An incantation of great cunning:
The great cunning of the women of Danu,
The great lady, Ireland,
Banba, Fotla, Eriu,
I invoke the land of Ireland!**

*dichetal rogaeth
rogaeth bán Danann
bé adbul Heriu
Banba, Fotla, Eriu,
Ailiu iath nHerend*

Deity or Deities

(If you have a strong connection with any Celtic deities, particularly deities connected with sovereignty, protection of the people, preservation of the natural or cultural worlds, fire, or signal fires, this would be a good time to open to them and ask their aid. If you don't have a particular deity you'd like to invite, many of the ritual participants are asking the blessings of Brighid, in her capacities as hearth goddess, fire goddess, and protector of Ireland. Celtic Christians who are participating with more explicitly Christian rituals will also be praying to her as a saint who watches over Ireland.)

RL: **A Bhríde** (phonetically “Ah Vreezh”)

All: chant **A Bhríde**

RL: **A Bhríde, be with us now as we re-light the signal fires. Be with us now and help us protect the sacred center, help us protect the land, help us protect Tara.**

**Victorious Brigit,
Glory of kindred,
Noble person,
Perilous oath,
Far-flung flame.
Gaeldom's foster-mother,
Support of strangers,
Spark of wisdom,
Daughter of Dubthach,
High-minded lady,
Victorious Brigit,
The living one of life.**

*Brigit Búadach,
Búaid na fine,
Nár in duine,
Eslind luige,
Lethan breo.
Mumme Goidel,
Riar na n-oíged,
Oíbel ecnai,
Ingen Dubthaig,
Duine úallach,
Brigit búadach,
Beo na beatha.*

RL: **Fire of healing, fire of inspiration, fire of protection. She who turns back the tides of war, She who turns back the destruction of the land. A Bhríde, we call upon you now, to protect the land, to protect Tara, to place your healing powers around the sacred center. Five concentric circles of protection surround Tara now.**

(Optional, before or after the above, you may also do the [Settling of the Manor of Tara](#))

(Optional: [Connect your locality](#) (if established relationship and consent) with Tara.)

Continue to pray to ancestors, goddesses, and spirits. Drum and dance, if that's what your group does, or continue chanting, praying, making offerings to fire. Continue to visualize the light growing stronger, as light shines from signal fires, hearth fires, and candles all over the world, all sending light and protection to Tara. Once the energy seems to have reached its peak, send a final burst to Tara.

Closing

RL thanks Deities, Ancestors, and the Spirits of the Land. See energy of ritual and ritualists returning to the Earth, the center, and balanced in participants' bodies. Make sure all energies are grounded.

RL: We have lit the fires for Tara. The sacred center shines again. As she did for our ancestors, she lights the way for us now. The sacred center will be unharmed. She will not be bulldozed, she will not be shamed, she will not be desecrated, she will not be marred. Her power and beauty, her strength and wisdom shine forth, illuminating the world. No one could even think of harming her. The sacred center is protected, now and forever. *Sláinte Mhaith.*

All: *Sláinte Mhaith.*

RL leads reversed version of Three Realms chant, and talks everyone back from any trancey states, back into the present, the here and now:

RL: We once again become aware of our connection with the Three Realms. We are always aware of the realms, and the center, but now, instead of moving into an Otherworldly space, we become aware of how the realms are always around us in normal reality. We become more strongly rooted in the present, not tranced out, moving into a grounded mode of being. We still feel the center, but we let go of some of our awareness of the Otherworld, that we may be fully present here and now. As we chant, see the energy of the Sea and Sky and Earth balancing among the respective realms. Become more aware of your physical body here and now. The energy flows from the sea, up to the sky, and down to us, where we stand on the sacred land. *Muir mas, nem nglas, talam cé* (phonetically: “mweer mahs, nem nlahs, taluhv kay”) English: “Sea, Sky, and Sacred Earth”.

RL: *Muir mas, nem nglas, talam cé*

All: *Muir mas, nem nglas, talam cé*

(Repeat call and response three times, or until grounded. It may be more grounding to do it in English, ending with “Sacred Earth” repeated multiple times)

RL: **We always return to the Sacred Earth: *talam cé***

All: *talam cé*

(Repeat “*talam cé*” or “Sacred Earth” till everyone seems present.)

RL ensures that everyone is grounded and back to a normal headspace, that all the energies are balanced and the spirits content. You can make a last offering, by passing around the item(s) to be offered and having people ground some energy into the offering. Then the RL can place it in the fire, to continue to feed Tara and the spirits. Suggestions: slices of apple, hazelnuts, a serving of pork or other dish from feast to come, Irish soda bread. If indoors, place the offering next to the central fire, and then later that night or in the morning take it out to a tree or other offerings-place.

When the final offering is done,

RL thanks all for attending the ritual, and says a ritual phrase to signal the work is done. It can be something improvised from the heart, or something as simple as:

RL: **Thank you all for attending this ritual, for working together to protect the land, our heritage, and our future. May there be peace between us now and always. We thank you. *Sláinte Mhaith!***

ALL: **We thank you. *Sláinte Mhaith!***

Aftermath and Winding Down

If possible, have a member or members keep the signal fire burning all night, or at least for a while. The individual candles are now connected to Tara. Participants can bring them home and light them periodically to meditate and reinforce the protection of Tara. (If no individual candles were used, participants can light one from central flame later on to carry fire home with them, or take a symbol of the fire home. A candle can be lit, meditated with, and then put out for your journey, just visualize the energy of the fire living in the candle, and reawakening whenever it's lit.) If you can't keep the fire burning all night, you could have someone keep a candle or lantern lit from it burning overnight on their altar, if they have a safe space to do that.

Those not keeping vigil with the flame can adjourn inside (or to another room, if you're working indoors) and share a feast for the ancestors. If the weather is conducive for

feasting around the fire outside, telling stories of the ancestors, and continuing to make toasts and informal offerings to them into the night, all the better.

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