

# THE BOOK OF TRIDEA



*A Guide to Practicing Goddess Religion*

by Lee Hutchings, PS  
Circle of the Green

First Edition, First Printing  
Published by Circle of the Green, Rochester, NY  
© 2007 All rights reserved.  
[www.circleofthegreen.org](http://www.circleofthegreen.org)  
Cover art: "The Swing" by Lee Hutchings

Copyright © 2007 by Lee Hutchings and Circle of the Green.  
All rights reserved.

Published by Circle of the Green, Rochester, NY  
[www.CircleoftheGreen.org](http://www.CircleoftheGreen.org)

Editorial, sales and distribution, rights and  
permission inquiries should be sent via e-mail  
to [circleofthegreen@gmail.com](mailto:circleofthegreen@gmail.com)

Cover design and artwork © 2007 by Lee Hutchings.  
All rights reserved.

Hutchings, Lee.  
The Book of Trideia: A Guide to Practicing Goddess  
Religion/by Lee Hutchings

1. Goddess 2. Paganism. 3. Goddess Religion. 4. Triple  
Goddess. 5. Goddess Tradition. 6. Goddess Spirituality.

*Understanding Happiness* © 2007 by Wendy Dettmer.  
All rights reserved.

First Edition.





## Dedication

Dedicated to all those who seek the Goddess - by all Her  
names and faces, within and without, above and below.  
Blessed Be.



# Introduction

**Tridea (tri-day-a) - a tradition of the Goddess meaning literally triple-goddess in Latin. Founded by Circle of the Green of Rochester, NY during the season of Ostara 2003.**

*"Believe nothing, no matter where you read it, or who said it, no matter if I have said it, unless it agrees with your own reason and your own common sense."*

- The Buddha

This is not a book about Wicca. It is a book about the Goddess and the practice of her ancient and nearly forgotten religion.

You will not find spells or magical instruction anywhere within these pages. What you will find is a complete religious system that can lead you to a more fulfilled and enlightened spiritual and material existence.

*The Book of Tridea* serves as a guide for practitioners of Tridea (the Tridean Goddess Tradition) and to inform those who are interested in Goddess religion.

Within these pages you will find information that can help you better understand the Goddess through attuning yourself with the cycles of nature and participating in regular spiritual practices.

Though some of this material may seem new it is believed by Trideans that the concepts are universal and ancient. Only the way they are presented here has been "re-mastered" to serve modern practitioners of Goddess Religion.

None of the words within this book would be possible if it were not for the members of Circle of the Green. Without these people, and the many conversations shared over the years, the ideas found here would be two

dimensional and lacking substance. I may have written it down, but multiple minds contributed to the creation of this volume.

The ideas found within this book have always been right before our eyes. Through intuition and the deep study of Nature and the ancient history of the Goddess, they come to light through the hearts of multiple individuals.

May those who find this little book take away something useful and meaningful to add to their spiritual practice.

In Her Service,  
Lee Hutchings, Tridean Priestess  
Circle of the Green







# The Book of Tridea : Contents

## **PART ONE: CONCEPTS**

Primordial Goddess of Nature and the Earth	15
Completion and the All Goddess	17
Visualizing Oneness	20
Understanding Judgment	23
Understanding Happiness*	26
Rebirth, Karma , and the Sacred Law	28
The Goddess and Gender	33
Tridean Principles of Belief	35
Principles of the Goddess	37

## **PART TWO: THE GODDESS**

Cycles of Sun and Moon	43
The Tridean Myth Cycle	45
The Maiden: Freedom	48
The Mother: Compassion	55
The Crone: Wisdom	62
Stories of the Goddess	68
Voices of the Goddess	78
Virtues of the Goddess	85

## **PART THREE: RITUAL & PRACTICE**

The Altar and Daily Practice	91
Basics of Ritual & Etiquette	97
Connecting through Nature	102
Solitary Rituals of the Moon	108
Group Ritual Outlines	111

## **PART FOUR: APPENDICES**

Appendix I: Prayer Beads of the Triple Goddess	117
Appendix II: Sample Rituals	120

\* Contributed by Wendy Dettmer of Circle of the Green



PART ONE  
Concepts





# Primordial Goddess of Nature and the Earth

The beliefs of the Tridean Goddess Tradition (or Tridea) are based on evidence of what is believed to be the oldest form of human religion. Physical artifacts, such as hand-carved statues and cave art, place the source of these beliefs in Paleolithic Europe as early as 25,000 years ago or more.

Ritualized female figures have been found in groups of hundreds with deliberately exaggerated breasts and bellies. When thoroughly examined these figures are found to point to a system of belief which illustrates how life comes into being and how the Universe operates. To this date there have been no similar male figures found to accompany them (Cashford and Baring).

Looking at these figures, and their ritualized representations of the parts of the body dealing with reproduction, it can be inferred that humanity's first image of a Creator was that of a mother. It is further concluded that these beliefs must go back to a time when people saw themselves as children of Nature, related to all of Creation, and part of a greater whole imagined as Goddess.

Goddess figures have been the subject of much controversy and debate. Some critical theories include the idea that they were meant as pornography. However, many tribal societies of today are not concerned with nudity. Why would tribal societies of the past have been any different with regards to the human body? If the body is not considered taboo (which it seems is the case with many tribal people) then there is no need to exploit the female form for sexual gratification.

Other critics have said the sculptures were meant as fertility idols and used only to perpetuate crops and female pregnancies. Even so, this still deifies the images as representations of forces of life that are not within human

control (such as birth and life) thus making them images of a deity; of a Goddess.

The feet of many of these Goddesses are found to be pointed, presumably so they could be pushed into the ground and stand up right. These could have been set outside the door of an ancient home to protect and bless those who lived within, or stuck into the earth during rituals as votive offerings to the Great Mother.

The extreme variety of the figures illustrate that this Goddess was multi-faceted to say the least; demonstrating her connection with all aspects of life and the natural world. They are not all plump, fertile images. Some figures are thin and bird like with intricate carvings of spirals and meanders that illustrate the abstract thought processes of her ancient people. Others almost look like phalluses with breasts and hinted facial features. And still others appear to be physically giving birth.

The many recovered ancient Goddess figures are clearly ritualized and steeped in what must have been an intricate mythology full of symbols and reverence for all aspects of life.

It is through the interpretation of this ancient Goddess of Nature and her mythology that Trideans learn their beliefs. And through those beliefs they better themselves and the world around them while striving on a path towards the enlightened Completion of the Great Goddess.



# Completion and the All Goddess

*Completion: the quality or state of being complete; having all necessary parts, elements, or steps (Merriam-Webster Online).*

The “necessary parts, elements, or steps” involved in the Tridean concept of Completion refer to the lessons of the Three-fold Path of the Goddess; freedom, compassion, and wisdom. It is believed that by instilling the combination of these virtues within the individual, one can come to the state of Completion – the state of the All Goddess.

Completion also includes the concept of balance. Just as Nature can create and destroy, so too can the children of Nature. Balance keeps the “darker” aspects of the mind in check by countering them with the “lighter” aspects. Trideans strive to become and remain balanced as the Goddess is balanced in order to facilitate peace of mind and a peaceful world.

While the Completion of the Goddess is the goal it is not believed to be attained through an idea of humanity-robbing perfection, but through peace which can only come through understanding the nature of the Goddess. This is achieved through meditation methods, prayer, and consistent self reflection.

It is believed that Completion may take many lifetimes to achieve. This idea is likened to the concept of Enlightenment or Total Consciousness made popular in the West by the influx of Eastern philosophies. In fact, the Christian concept of Heaven can be compared to the idea of Completion. Reaching Heaven (the god-head) after a good life is a similar metaphor for this idea. Completion simply includes the belief in reincarnation instead of a single earthly existence.

By whatever name this concept is referred to it contains common ideas and is present in one form or another in many cultures throughout the world.

### **The All Goddess (Panthea)**

*Panthea: (Greek), All-Goddess or All Things are Goddess.*

The idea of Completion is symbolized by the All-Goddess; the sum of the other three of her aspects and the Source of All Things. The Goddess has many faces, names, and aspects yet she remains a singular entity commonly referred to in Tridea as the All-Goddess.

If you are familiar with the Christian concept of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit/Ghost) then understanding this idea may not be too difficult for you. In fact, trinities are not limited to Christian theology and many are dated before the days of Christ.

When examining mythologies throughout the world many deities come in triplicate form. An example of this is the Brahman trinity (or the Brahmanical triad) of Hinduism. This consists of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Each of these deities has a primary function (creation, preservation, and destruction) but together they are seen as one.

It is important to realize that compartmentalization is a common technique that the human mind uses to gain an understanding of something that is not easily comprehended. This is done often with deity concepts. It is not always easy to wrap your mind around a concept as abstract as "god".

It has been said that our minds are not capable of understanding the vastness of space let alone the concept of an infinite creator that is all things and nothing at the same time. In order to rationalize conundrums like these the mind needs order.

The Triple Goddess model is the order used by Trideans to strive towards a better understanding of the All Goddess. Through each of her faces we gain insight into ourselves and the world around us.

### **Symbols of Completion**

Most triple or triangular forms can be considered images of Completion and the All-Goddess. They are made up of three parts yet joined together they create a fourth aspect that is the whole.

Below are various symbols that illustrate the concept of the Triple Goddess. Another, the triskele or triple spiral, can be seen on the front and back cover as well as various other places in this book.



The circle can also be seen as a symbol of the All Goddess and of Completion. The circle is not only the sacred symbol of the Goddess, but it can also be seen as the symbolic representation of “coming full circle” in terms of Completion.

A circle is “cast” or created during rituals to represent these concepts and to symbolize the protective womb and endless cycles of the Goddess from which all life springs. (See *Why we Cast Circles* on page 94.)

# Visualizing Oneness

*That which exists now has always existed.*

Human beings have a tendency to think in terms of things being created and destroyed when the truth is that everything is simply transformed.

When you burn twigs in your campfire are you destroying the wood or creating the ashes? In a sense you are doing both. The wood has not ceased to exist, but has been transformed into the hot embers and ash that float from the pit of the fire.

So what does this have to do with the Goddess, you ask? Well we are the embers from the fire, the flaming spirit of the Great Mother. Every living creature is the transformed image of the Goddess herself, molded from the very fabric of the Universe. In this way of thinking we are one being with many faces and qualities. We are the created and the Creator.

Think for a moment about your body. There are many parts, billions of cells, numerous strands of hair, but they are all part of one you. These parts and cells interact with each other with the purpose of keeping you healthy and alive. Is it possible that we, in a way, are the cells that make up the Goddess? Perhaps our purpose is to realize our essential Oneness in order to keep all that is of her thriving. Since Oneness teaches that all things, down to every tiny atom in existence, are of the Goddess this gives us a very large task to accomplish.

## **Oneness Exercise: The Apple**

The purpose of this exercise is to help the mind grasp the concept of Oneness. Some may find this difficult considering it is not an idea most Westerners have been

conditioned to believe in. On the contrary, most of us have been taught that we are completely separate from deity throughout the course of our lives. Realizing that we are the divine and actually seeing ourselves as “god” can be a daunting thought and even considered blasphemy.

Rest assured there is no sin to commit in believing in the reality of Oneness. The Goddess teaches that we are of her – that we are her. Blasphemy would be to believe we are separate from her in any way.

This exercise can be done with any familiar object. For the sake of explanation let’s choose an apple.

Examine your apple with all of your senses. Let your consciousness slip and focus on the form of the fruit. Take note of the color, shape, scent, taste, weight, etc. Now realize the many parts within the apple that make it whole. It has skin, flesh, seeds, and a stem. Perhaps there are holes or bruises on the apple as well.

Now imagine the apple as the Goddess. There are many individual parts of the apple, but it is one whole object. The flesh is not separate from the seeds, nor the seeds from the skin or stem. Realize that you are but one part of the Goddess, but you are her nonetheless.

Let your consciousness expand outward and think about the tree that the apple came from. Imagine its lovely white blossoms, the rough, bark-covered branches. Feel the rain and sunlight that helped the tree to grow, and the fruit to ripen. Now we see that the apple is also a part of something larger than itself.

Now let your consciousness slip again and allow it to expand further outward towards the universe. Try to comprehend the immense vastness of space. See the oneness within it as well and see yourself as a part of it.

Continue with this exercise until you feel ready to stop. It is worth revisiting again and again. Don’t forget to make note of your experiences in your journal.

## Pondering Oneness

Listed below are some questions for you to consider when contemplating Oneness. A journal would be a great place to list your thoughts, reactions, and epiphanies relating to these topics. Let your mind wander, draw pictures, and try to write in a “stream of consciousness” sort of way for the best results.

1. If the Goddess created the Earth did the Earth create us (life) or did the Goddess create us directly?
2. Do plants, the Earth, etc. have consciousness?
3. When a plant dies and returns in the spring is it the same plant or a different one?
4. What if it grows from the same root system?
5. Are we our children?
6. Are we our parents?
7. Does our consciousness live outside of our body?
8. What happens after we die - to our bodies and our consciousness?
9. If you have one rock and break it in half do you have two individual pieces of one thing or two completely separate rocks?
10. When you light a candle from a flame that is already burning when does the fire become individual? In other words, when does the fire become its own source?

# Understanding Judgment

By using the term 'judgment' the process that people use to make basic, everyday decisions in their lives is not what's being referred to. Certain types of judgments are necessary. You wouldn't eat a piece of fruit if you judged it to be rotten. Instead what's being referred to is the judgment of yourself and others that prevents the freedom to live with the recognition of the Oneness of all things.

Judging yourself by making comparisons with the rest of society restricts you from knowing your true self and understanding your own potential as an individual part of the whole. This hinders freedom and Oneness by allowing you to be enslaved by society and by creating separation.

Judging others by comparing them to yourself or societal norms equally impacts your personal freedom and Oneness by creating yet more separation. Whether you like someone or not is meaningless. People as individuals are bound to have personality conflicts, but these differences can be peacefully embraced even if they are not always understood. You must ask yourself whose perception of 'normal' or 'wrong' you are basing your judgments on. If all things are truly one then to judge another is to judge oneself.

Destroying the tendency to judge is pivotal to taking hold of one's personal freedom - becoming your true self; truly free to be just who you are.

As a species we have a sometimes aching need for perfection in almost every little aspect of our lives. Even if an individual doesn't have the typical perfectionist personality the desire for order and the drive to attain perfection still remains within the human psyche.

Some of this is influenced by the society we live in and yet other factors can be seen in the way we are raised and the expectations we get assigned (by ourselves and others) throughout our lifetimes. It is important to realize

that we are not meant to be perfect; that perfection itself is a very subjective concept. In fact, we are intended to be imperfect. This, in a way, makes imperfection our true state of perfection.

A bird is not meant to be anything but a bird. It is certainly not meant to be a bear, a cat, or anything other than a bird. A bird doesn't feel bad about itself for not being that bear or that cat. It simply is what it is. This is true for people. We are meant to be people - not superheroes, not gods - only people.

We are capable of great things and we hold an amazing amount of potential. We can accomplish anything we put our minds to, but we are also flawed and vulnerable by nature. This is exactly what we are supposed to be.

There is no such thing as perfection - or perhaps there is no such thing as imperfection. All things are exactly as they are meant to be when stripped bare and at the core of their being.

Removing judgment is a difficult process to go through and one that may take years to complete. A total reworking of one's thought processes may be necessary. Try to think outside the box that has been built around you during your life. Peel back the layers of the proverbial onion and allow the Goddess to reveal things in their true light.

### **Judgment Exercise**

To begin the task of removing judgment it may be helpful to spend some time meditating on your thought processes. Jot down a list of things that may make up each link of the chains holding you back from real freedom.

To get the ball rolling contemplate what freedom means to you. Remember that we are not specifically talking about physical restraints, and that you are the one who creates your own chains. There is no way to make your



dramas someone else's fault. Remember the Goddess's lesson of self responsibility

Now try to answer some of the following questions or come up with your own.

- How and who do you judge?
- How do you judge yourself?
- How are you controlled by what others think of you?
- Are you haunted by guilt from past transgressions?
- Is fear a part of your life?
- Do you let others make decisions for you?
- Do you feel controlled or stifled by others?
- Are your actions done by your will or the will of someone else?
- Do you choose to be in relationships or do you feel obligated?

Once you have defined what restricts your freedom you can work on remedying those situations. Becoming free from fear, guilt, and judgment encompasses the first leg of your spiritual journey. The Goddess will be your willing guide along the forested path. Follow her to the water's edge and see that your reflection matches her own.

# Understanding Happiness\*

Many people in society today feel pressure and a strong need to 'strive' for happiness, as though it is something outside our reach, difficult to obtain, and ephemeral. However, happiness is our spirit's natural state of being.

Our souls want to be happy, want us to rejoice, feel good, and have joy in our lives. When we find ourselves unhappy, depressed, sad, or feeling any other negative emotion, we are resisting our natural state of wellbeing, and struggling against our very spirits.

Along the same lines, our spirits natural state is also one of balance. It is with this balance that we find ourselves in a state of oneness and perfect harmony, therefore happiness. We must recognize that we choose our state of being at any given moment, and it is impossible to feel both happy and sad at the same instant.

At any given moment in our lives, we have the ability to choose what we wish to experience - a positive emotion or a negative one. While it is true that 'bad' things may happen in our existence, we are still in complete control of our reactions to all situations. This is not to say that negative emotions are a bad thing, as we will all have times when we feel them. But when we notice ourselves feeling bad, depressed, frustrated or angry, it is important to realize that we are capable of pivoting on that thought, and changing our direction to something clearer, happier and positive.

We can accept that negative things will happen in our lives, and they are part of the great balance. But it serves no purpose to dwell. Rather, recognize the moment, and make a choice to feel happy as you continue onward.

Now this is, for many, easier said than done. It takes practice and some planning to learn how to make the choice to be happy, even when things appear to be going wrong.

First, it is helpful to make a mental list of things that make you happy. These could range from spending time with your partner, playing with your children, meditating during a full moon, walking on the beach, and so on and so forth. When you make this mental list, spend time visualizing what it would feel like to be engaging in these activities. Imagine yourself walking near the ocean, with the warm sand giving way beneath your steps. Feel the salty breeze against your cheek and tangle your hair. Visualize yourself in the moment.

When you feel yourself frustrated, angry, ready for a fight, sad, depressed or in any other state of negativity, close your eyes and pull back that visualization. This could last as few as 10 seconds, or as long as you need to bring your mind to a place of peace. It may help to say the following affirmation, or you may create one that better suits your needs.

*Great Mother  
Embracing your Spirit  
I am calm and centered*

\* Contributed by Wendy Dettmer of Circle of the Green

# Rebirth, Karma, and the Sacred Law

## **The Sacred Law**

*There is but one law that shall serve as a guide for all of your spiritual and mundane endeavors...*

*The universe functions on a system of balances. Know that this system will return to you all that you give it in order to maintain that balance. In one life or the next, the Universe will repay its debt to you.*

***Love begets love. Hate begets hate.  
Walk the path of love  
and it shall be your blessing.  
Walk the path of hate  
and it shall be your curse.***

*You will not find hundreds of written rules to live by here. Only you can decide with your best judgment what is right and what is wrong and whom you will respect and whom you will not. Only you can put yourself on a spiritual path and only you can know the reasons why to choose that particular path.*

*As human beings we strive to reach the balanced state of the One. The Goddess holds all things in perfect harmony. There is a method to what seems like the entropy of everyday life. People must pass on to the next world for other souls to come into this one. There is a need for destruction and creation for you can have neither without the other.*

*Though there must be destruction, the Goddess is not vengeful or vicious. All is done by necessity, not animosity. Those that walk paths of hatred and fear have become very unbalanced and cannot accept the darkness that hides within us all. The first step to overcoming the darkness is to claim it as a part of yourself that you must love. Only then can you integrate the darkness and begin achieving balance.*

*There is no wrath to fear; only The Sacred Law that governs all will decide your punishment. Hence, you will be punishing yourself.*

~ Originally printed in Circle of the Green Informational Material, 2003

### **Rebirth, Reincarnation, and Karma**

*Reincarnation: rebirth in new bodies or forms of life; especially: a rebirth of a soul in a new human body (Merriam-Webster Online).*

Most people of this age are familiar with the idea of Reincarnation. For this reason the concept will not be dissected at length here. Instead it will simply be stated as to how Reincarnation applies to Tridean beliefs.

Trideans believe in Rebirth – that all things are reborn spiritually into another state of being after death. After a period of rest the spirit may then return to physical existence.

*Karma: the force generated by a person's actions to perpetuate transmigration and in its ethical consequences to determine the nature of the person's next existence (Merriam-Webster Online).*

The quality of one's present and future lives may be determined by Karma; the system of balance that governs the Universe.

There may be debate as to whether the Goddess simply instilled this system of balance or whether she actually controls it. That is a theological discussion best left to individual practitioners at this time as Tridea has no "official" position on the subject.

The Tridean belief in Karma is illustrated in the Sacred Law. The basic idea is a reflection of ancient adages such as “you get what you give”, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you”, etc.

A common Wiccan belief tells of the Rule of Three which states that whatever you give comes back to you through Karma times three. Trideans do not believe this idea is one of balance and do not adhere to it.

Nature, and very specifically the moon and seasons illustrate the concept of Rebirth. The moon appears to die and is reborn every month, as does the sun every year. Rebirth is best illustrated at the Winter Solstice, but is also present in the rites of High Winter (or Imbolc) when the Goddess makes her return from the Underworld.

Because Nature teaches us that nothing ever truly dies, and that all things return in one form or another, Reincarnation seems like a very logical conclusion when pondering the possibilities of an afterlife.

### **The Sacred Law and Karma**

The thing to remember when living by the Sacred Law is that though there seems to be no hard rules to follow and no commandments to worry about, this does not mean that you can do whatever you want.

Wiccans live by the “Harm None” philosophy. This is present within the Sacred Law also. It pretty much says the same thing as “The Wiccan Rede” but in fewer words. Basically if your actions cause harm then through Karma you will also be harmed. This then means that you must be willing to be held responsible for your actions and the consequences that come with them.

Now, we all make mistakes. It’s human nature to screw up every now and again. Most of the time (if not all the time) when Karma is doled out it also teaches you some

lessons. There is no such thing as cruel and unusual Karma. The punishment or reward always fits the action. There would be no balance otherwise.

So, you might be wondering if this whole Karma thing then replaces the fear of Hell as punishment for misdeeds. Yes and no. Hell is all fire and brimstone, eternal damnation, and being tortured by some red dude with pointy horns forever. Karma comes in both “good” and “bad” versions but the effects are temporary. Let’s look at some examples.

If you punch someone in the face the appropriate Karmic reaction to this would be to also be punched in the face. This is what John Lennon was talking about in his song “Instant Karma”.

If you are a mean and bitter person who continually hurts people throughout your lifetime then in your next life the same hurt that you caused will be done to you. This is a more long term Karmic reaction. On the flipside, if you’re a good person who loves and helps others in your lifetime then Karma will give you a good hand the next time around. You may even get a better deal than you’ve already got.

So, Karma is temporary (in theory) and often limited to a lifetime or two while Hell is forever. Basically, the soul is always given the chance to evolve; to better itself and pay off its Karmic debt. There are plenty of ways to be punished and rewarded here on Earth. If you’re a really bad individual then after a few lifetimes or so of hellish circumstances you may be given the chance to move up the Karma ladder.

The story below is a 100% actual account of Karma (of the instant variety) in action. It’s included here to shed some personal experience on what could otherwise be a completely abstract concept.

## Instant Karma's Gonna Get You

A few years ago I did a good thing. There was a woman who lived in my complex whose father was dying in the hospital and the young woman had no way to get to him. Her car was broken down or something like that. So, I offered to give her a ride.

Before I continue let me give you a little background information about my relationship to this particular person.

The young woman, I'll call her Tina, was a born again Christian - at least that was what she professed to me. I had seen her speak in tongues on more than one occasion and she often lectured me on the gospel. One time she even came to my door, at the request of her mother, to try and save my soul. They were well meaning, if not a little strange. I was always polite and did my best to explain my beliefs to her in the best way I knew how. It did little to convince Tina or her mother. I can still remember Tina's face when I 'confessed' that I didn't believe in sin. So, back to the story...

I drove Tina to the hospital making polite chatter as we traveled. She insisted on giving me gas money since my low fuel light was on before we began our trip and it was still two days before I got paid. I refused and told her not to worry about it - that I'd make it home on my good Karma. I said this in a kidding way... well mostly.

As we pulled into the parking lot of the hospital she asked again if she could give me some money for my trouble. I assured her that it was no trouble at all. Just as I spoke I caught a flash of green out of the corner of my eye. There, lying in a puddle of rainwater and leaves was a five dollar bill. I jumped from the car, looked around to see if someone might have dropped the money then slid it into my pocket with a shrug.

"See," I said. "Karma."



# The Goddess and Gender

*The religion of the Goddess is ancient. Some scholars theorize that Goddess societies were more peaceful and embraced equality between the sexes.*

Tridea is not considered a feminist religion simply because deity is imagined as female. Politics and personal agenda should not be injected into spiritual practices. In fact, Trideans believe that all people – and all life for that matter – are of the Goddess. They also believe that the Goddess herself is completely balanced, containing both male and female qualities. Separation is not something that is embraced. Instead Trideans strive to attain an understanding of Oneness.

Some of the earliest images of the Goddess are depicted in an androgynous manner with both male and female principles. It is believed that the reason behind this is the idea of Oneness.

The Goddess is completely female and completely male; having all the traits necessary for creation. She is nothing less than the totality of being complete and without separation.

The male aspect of the Goddess is seen as a horned animal, or as a half human, half animal being. He can be seen as a metaphor for the spiritual seeker, the shaman, and the mystic who strives for the length of their life to understand the mysteries of the Great Goddess. He is seen as half animal to denote his inherent and primal connection to Nature and the Goddess.

The Goddess is the whole while the God image is but a facet of her. The myth of the God/Hunter can not survive outside of the myth of the Goddess. Furthermore, evidence for myths of the God, Hunter, Son, Lover concepts are not present before the Bronze Age. The belief of a primordial

Goddess of Oneness predates this time period by millennia.  
(Cashford and Baring)

Misconceptions of these myths have led some to believe that the male of the species has no part in the religion of the Goddess. This could not be further from the truth. In fact, since the Goddess is the representation of Oneness, she is ever present in all forms of life both male and female. While some mysteries of the Goddess are apparent through the female reproductive processes, the image of the Goddess transcends any one woman or the female body. Men are as much manifestations of the Goddess as women are.

The Goddess creates parthenogenically, or of herself. While there is no separation and the Goddess does not exalt her female children over her male (or her two legged over her four legged) the female sex is considered the original form. All fetuses begin as female in their mother's womb. Furthermore, recent evolutionary science has proposed that male reproductive organs are a secondary evolution that came about to keep the gene pool more diverse.

To illustrate this concept let's take a mature look at human anatomy; very specifically at the parts of the anatomy that determine sex.

Males have nipples because while they were gestating in their mother's womb for the first few months, they were anatomically female. Where did the male genitalia come from? Well, before the hormones that determine gender were released in the womb the penis was a clitoris, the scrotum was labia, and the testes were ovaries. Now, where did the female sex organs come from?

# Principles of Tridean Belief

## **First Principle of Belief: Oneness of Divinity and All Things**

Energy cannot be created or destroyed. It simply changes forms. All that exists at the present has always existed. If the Goddess is the source, than all life is one life, all beings are manifestations of deity and are one.

By whatever name and by whatever gender gods may be recognized, Trideans believe they are one being with many facets, as light that pours through a prism or crystal. Though there appears to be many different lights shining from the crystal, in actuality there is only one.

## **Second Principle of Belief: The Sacred Law Governs All**

Trideans recognize the existence of powers beyond human comprehension at work in the Universe. They believe in balance through Karma, the existence of Fate, and the non-existence of coincidences. Everything happens for a reason. Treat others as you would be treated and the Universe, through the Divine, will provide.

## **Third Principle of Belief: Practice and Self Responsibility**

It does not matter how one practices their tradition so long as they are ethical in their ways. The true matter lies in why one practices. Power will not be given to those who cannot better their world without the appropriate karmic repercussions. The Universe owes you nothing if you have never given back to the Universe. All actions have consequences.

#### **Fourth Principle of Belief: Nature as Sacred Guide**

Trideans believe that Nature is sacred and the guide through which the lessons of the Goddess are revealed. From the moon, the sun, the stars, the earth, and the entire natural world; Trideans honor the Goddess by honoring Nature.

#### **Fifth Principle of Belief: Betterment of the Mind and the Soul**

The mind is vast and powerful. Trideans believe it should be used to learn and to educate others as well. Study is important no matter what the subject. But always remember that knowledge cannot replace imagination. All talents should be embraced and encouraged. Every soul has a greater purpose.

# The Principles of the Goddess

**1. Be not removed from nature, yourself, or others.  
The Universe is one divine being and all within it  
can teach the lessons of the Goddess.**

- a) All living things (including yourself) are divine.
- b) Nature itself is divine.
- c) The Goddess is present in all things.

**2. Do no harm, but defend and protect life.**

- a) To serve the Lady of Life is to preserve and defend the cause of life.
- b) Defend your home, your children, loved ones, and those in need.
- c) Always remember the Sacred Law.

**3. Speak truth and exhibit the love of the Goddess  
in all your actions.**

- a) All is one and all is loved as part of the Goddess.
- b) No lies are present in love and love is the Goddess.
- c) Lies prevent personal freedom and oneness.

**4. Indulge in life, love, and joy.**

- a) Make love without shame. \*
- b) Eat well but share your harvest with those who have less.
- c) Dance and make merry be you sober or drunk. ^
- d) Live well without guilt so long as you contribute to the cause of life.

**5. Connect with the Goddess by whatever name or gender She may come to you.**

- a) Pray, petition, and/or meditate however and wherever you see fit.
- b) The Goddess exists with both male and female principles and energies.
- c) Respect all faces of divinity and all forms of positive worship.

\* It is not suggested that one be promiscuous without responsibility or without realizing the risk of repercussions. All actions have consequences.

^ This is not to suggest alcoholism is okay. If you choose to drink do so in moderation







PART TWO

# The Goddess





## Cycles of the Sun and Moon

It is theorized that lunar mythology predates solar mythology in most if not all cultures (Cashford and Baring). For this reason Trideans believe that the moon is the source for all later cosmologies. Thus interpretations of the Moon Goddess are continued into the other natural cycles of sun and earth.

The moon is a literal symbol of the unmanifest made manifest and through its multiple phases a Triple Goddess figure comes into being. A fourth aspect is evident with the dark phase of the moon. Each of these phases represents an aspect of the Goddess and illustrates a spiritual concept.

The waxing moon represents the Maiden who teaches freedom through non-judgment and a realization of Oneness. She frees the mind of that which causes the judgment of the self and others. The Maiden is also a symbol of beginnings and inspiration. She is the Revealer; the one who guides the spirit through the processes of Shadow-Work and self awareness.

The full moon is a symbol of the Mother aspect. The Mother teaches the unconditional love and compassion that comes from understanding the Oneness of all things. She teaches us to love all life as we would our own children, nourishing and caring for all of creation as we would an infant at the breast. The Mother is also the Protector; the fierce Mother-Bear who would risk her own life to save that of her child.

The waning moon is the Crone's face. She is wisdom incarnate; the experienced Priestess of life and death. She is the Gatekeeper between the worlds and the harbinger of death and its lessons. She teaches us that true wisdom is born out of both light and darkness. She is the wise old woman, alone with her thoughts and reflecting on the moments of her life. She understands that all things happen

for a reason. She sees the lessons that life has laid before her and is grateful for all she has learned.

The dark moon symbolizes the All-Goddess, the promise of rebirth into the Otherworld, and the union of Completion. She is all things; things that can be understood and things that cannot. The All-Goddess is the culmination of the other three aspects. She is the source in its purest form.

The cycles of the sun and earth, or the seasons, are seen to carry the same concepts of the cycle of the moon on a grander scale. The solar year is a further, more detailed instruction from the blueprint of Nature where the Goddess is seen to be born from the Otherworld, takes a mate, ages, dies, and gives birth again to herself in the act of rebirth.

The solar mysteries illustrate our connection to the rest of Creation through observations of the sowing and reaping of seeds, the lives of animals, and the changing of the Earth. The moon, by contrast, is a source of individual mystery representing ideas of intrinsically spiritual and personal awareness. Both of these cycles demonstrate Shamanic principles and physically reflect the adage “as above, so below”.

# Tridean Myth Cycle of the Goddess

The purpose of myth is to provide stories that, whether the believer takes them as actual fact or not, illustrate fundamental insights into human nature and the surrounding universe. This is often done through the use of archetypes which Carl Jung proposed are “innate, universal prototypes for ideas that may be used to interpret observations”. The Goddess in her many manifestations is the archetype utilized by Trideans.

The Tridean myth cycle of the solar year depicts the Goddess rebirthing herself at the Winter Solstice in the Otherworld. This is the time of Completion and rebirth that illustrates what lies beyond the physical world and the concept of reincarnation. It is a time of the All-Goddess and of the peace that comes with knowing her lessons.

The Goddess surfaces from her slumber at High Winter (Imbolc). This first appearance of the Goddess since journeying to the Otherworld at High Autumn (Samhain) serves as a catalyst that stirs the earth back to life. She is the returning Maiden, the first show of the Earth’s fertile blood, and the symbol of the growling light that was born at Winter Solstice.

By the time of the Vernal Equinox (Ostara) the Goddess has matured into womanhood and takes a mate – the Horned God; another manifestation of herself and her creation as Son/Lover. After finding her mate she becomes pregnant with the Child of Completion – herself. Fertility begins to reign on earth as plants and animals grow and multiply.

By High Spring (Beltane) the Goddess has discovered her pregnancy and has transitioned into the Mother aspect. This is a time of the realization and celebration of freedom. At this time the Goddess joins again with her lover and brings yet more fertile energy to the land. The whole of

creation celebrates freedom and the hope that new life brings to earth. Beltane is also one of the two traditional times (the other being Samhain) that the veil between the worlds is said to thin and spirits can pass from the Otherworld into this one.

Through the Summer Solstice (Midsummer) the Goddess continues to grow with child. She keeps her mate close to her, drawing on his love and protective energy during her time of growth and fertility. She is learning about love – the kind of unconditional love that comes from abolishing judgment and understanding Oneness. The Goddess is at her peak; ripe, and fertile, but she knows that the light will now begin to wane. She calls on Creation to celebrate, to find love and joy in the warmth of the sun and earth.

It is an old Irish myth tradition that tells us High Summer (Lughnasadh) is a time for feasting and sport in honor of the Great Goddess. This is the first harvest and the time in the Tridean tradition when the God begins his decline. He is a symbol of the wheat cut down by the sickle of the reaping Crone Goddess who now takes the place of the Mother.

At the Autumnal Equinox the God dies, and with him begins the decline of the earth. He has left the Goddess an aging woman alone with herself and her memories. The Goddess guides her lover to the Otherworld but she can not yet follow him. She has tasted death and, as she mourns, begins to understand its mysteries. She becomes the Gatekeeper between the worlds and the one who guides the souls of the dead back to the Otherworld of her womb. It is through the Crone that Completion is attained and with it rebirth. This is also the time of the second harvest feast and of giving thanks.

At High Autumn (Samhain) the Goddess has learned her lessons and completed her journey. She now begins a

new journey to the Otherworld, thinning the veil again as she goes. This is a time of remembrance for all those who have come before. The ancestors and the spirits of the dead are said to be able to visit this world through the thinning of the veil. Samhain is the beginning of the time of Completion.

It is within the Otherworld that her other aspects will join her to bring the Child of Completion to birth and begin the cycle again.

# The Maiden: Freedom

*As it was written on the Temple of Gaia (later Apollo) at Delphi; where priestesses performed their sacred duties as Oracle... Know Thyself.*

Through the Maiden aspect of the Great Goddess you can discover who you are without the confines of the society in which you live. You will begin to think completely for yourself, make all of your own decisions, and live with your own consequences. You will learn to speak and live truthfully and remember the innocence you once had as a child. The Maiden teaches your spirit how to be truly free.

In myth, the Maiden is typically a young woman without family or home to care for. She lives for the moment and frolics in the forests like Artemis and her Nymphs. She is young, unclaimed, and forever virginal. These traits are examples of metaphors that demonstrate spiritual concepts.

Virginity is a symbol of being untied, owning only oneself, and one's own energy. In fact, this is the original meaning of the word virgin. Everyone struggles with feeling owned or controlled in their lives. It might be by a spouse, a parent, a friend, an addiction, or an illness.

For a moment let yourself see the reality of the Maiden present in all people. The essence of the Maiden is not her physical appearance, her gender, her age, nor her status in society; it is her pure and unabashed freedom. She is a roaming spirit, a free thinker, and a person unto herself who strives to remove the binding shackles of her existence whatever they may be. The Maiden is a state of the spirit not a physical state of being.

While the Maiden is truly free, she does no harm unto others by being so. When she is wrong she admits it. Her strong sense of personal responsibility allows her to accept any consequences her actions may require. When she sees



injustice she strives to change it for the good of all. She is the embodiment of perfect truth, the waxing moon, the revealer which is born from the deepest and most mysterious of shadows.

The Maiden will teach you to look within your own dark recesses to reveal the truth of your nature. This is usually not an easy process.

Looking within your darkness can cause discomfort and doubt, but it can eventually lead to a better understanding of self and more control over “darker” traits and impulses. This is a crucial part of your enlightenment which has been presented in myths since the beginning of human history. This concept can also be seen in the stories of our age, many of which are modern interpretations of ancient ideas.

It may seem corny, but think back to the character of Luke Skywalker for just a moment. He is pressed by Yoda (his spiritual teacher) to enter a cave and confront his fears as a part of his training towards the enlightenment of understanding “the Force”.

What Luke learns inside the cave is that his fears are all manifestations of himself. When he cuts the head from Darth Vader he sees only the vision of his own face staring back at him from inside the disembodied helmet. It is the Maiden who reveals the source of Luke’s fears and bids him to look no further than himself for answers.

The above story is only a modern example of the Inner Revealer concept, used here to illustrate this idea in simple, familiar terms. I am certainly not proposing we deify characters from Star Wars.

The Maiden is also the source of those flashes of clarity that I like to call “epiphany moments”. This quality connects her with the traditional interpretation of the air element. She is inspiration, a catalyst for the mind, the

breeze that clears the dust from those otherwise unused portions of your psyche.

Connect with the Maiden through the wind as it blows through your hair. Watch in wonder as she dances with the trees. Listen carefully and you may even hear the music that they dance to.

### **Affirmation of the Maiden**

Use this affirmation daily to find the freedom of the Maiden within yourself. Tape it to your bathroom mirror or scrawl it in your daily planner. Memorize it and recite it whenever you require the presence of the Maiden.

*Holy Maiden,  
Give me the strength to accept,  
The courage to love truthfully,  
And the knowledge of self.  
Within you I find my freedom.*

### **A Journey with the Maiden**

Sit in a comfortable, quiet place. Light candles, incense, or anything that may set the mood for you. You may choose to listen to soft, playful music.

Your journey begins in the forest. Flowering plants line the path where you stand. The crocus, first flower of spring, is among them. Other sweet smelling blossoms of white and yellow accompany the crocus, their heads bobbing in the slight breeze.

You can hear birds chirping above you in the trees. They sing a song of spring, of hope, and of beginnings. Look up and see them fly from branch to branch and soar through the bright blue sky. Accompany their song with a whistle or softly hum a cheery tune.

Begin to slowly walk the path. Take time to stop and smell some of the flowers or to pick up a shiny stone at your feet. Be inquisitive and explore your surroundings. Time has no meaning here. Skip, dance, or continue to sing with the birds. This is a place of innocence where you can embrace the child that lives within you.

After walking for a time you come upon a gate. It is covered in vines and more blooms of white and yellow. Remove the fetters of your clothes and breathe the clean, free flowing air. Feel the weights of fear, guilt, and judgment fall to the ground with your garments then move through the gate.

You are now in a meadow filled with all manner of wild flowers, butterflies, and buzzing bees. You can see a cottage a short way ahead but you do not go there now.

The breeze moves like kisses on your bare skin. Laugh and spin in the sunlight as it pours out like golden honey upon you. Listen to the trees move in the wind and spread your arms to sway with them in a sacred dance.

As you dance you notice you are no longer alone. A woman has come to dance beside you. She is naked as well and smiling at you with truth glittering in her eyes. There is nothing false about this woman. She is exactly what she shows to the world. You trust her and as she motions for you to come with her you follow without hesitation.

She takes you to a pool of water and bids you to look into the surface with her. You see yourself within the water, but as the wind moves and a ripple passes over the surface your reflection changes, transforming the lines and contours of your face until it matches that of the Lady beside you.

Embrace the Lady and speak with her for a time if you choose. Does she give you anything? Do you have gifts for her?

When you are finished speaking, embrace the Lady again and bid her farewell. Return to the gate, taking only

what you need from the pile of garments as you pass through. Move back down the path and allow your consciousness to surface slowly.

### **Embracing the Maiden Ritual**

You will need a symbol of the Maiden. This could be a handful of herbs, a gemstone, an altar statue, etc. (See *Virtues of the Goddess* for more options.) You will also need a white candle, your favorite incense, an electric fan, and at least a half hour of uninterrupted time. This ritual should be performed during the waxing moon, ideally at the first quarter.

If possible remove your clothes and dim or turn out the lights in the room. Light the candle and the incense keeping them, and anything else that might blow away, out of the wind reach of the fan.

Invite the Maiden to join you in your own words. You may chose a specific Maiden goddess to work with or you may simply call upon the Maiden aspect of the Triple Goddess. Turn on the fan and let the breeze blow over your face and body. Recite the following:

*Maiden of Freedom,  
may your presence bring me the keys to my emotional shackles.  
Allow me to always be true to myself and find joy in my life.  
You are within me. We are one.*

Continue to sit in front of the fan allowing your mind to sink into a state of meditation. Fill your senses with the breeze; the sound, the feeling on your skin, the aroma of the incense. This may be a time to use the Maiden Meditation you read earlier or you might simply clear your mind and listen for the words of the Goddess.

When you are ready take three deep breaths then turn off the fan. Thank the Maiden and release her in your own words. Extinguish the candle and the incense. If at all possible, remain skyclad (being naked and in the physical state of freedom) and go outside or stand in a window to view the waxing moon.

You may choose to chant (see Prayers and Chants of the Maiden) as you stand in the moonlight, calling on the power of the Maiden within you and bidding her to make her presence known.

The waxing moon is a time of growth. Realize that you are also in a period of growth. You are seeking truth and freedom within yourself through the Maiden. Your journey does not have to be a struggle. She has been with you all along. You only need to notice her presence in all things and especially within yourself. Bask in her light and reaffirm to yourself that you are one with her and with all things.

The ritual is ended here. Jot down anything that may have come to you while you were meditating and/or gazing at the moon.

### **Prayers and Chants of the Maiden**

I.  
Maiden Goddess,  
Light of Truth and Beginnings,  
I embrace you within myself,  
And dance with you on the wind.  
Let me be a warrior for truth,  
And a bringer of peace.  
My heart sings your melody  
And my spirit is forever free.

II.

Artemis of the forest,  
Huntress and Queen of Beasts,  
Midwife and warrior of the weak,  
Let your light surround me and be within me.  
May all fear be forgotten.  
May all hope be restored.  
Lady Artemis, bless me with your gifts.

III.

Maiden of Spring,  
Sweet Persephone,  
Of your light we sing.  
Through truth and joy  
Let our Freedom ring.

IV.

She changes everything She touches  
And everything She touches changes  
(Traditional chant of Kore)

V.

The cage has been opened  
And the shackles are broken  
So mote it be,  
The Maiden Queen has spoken

VI.

The Maiden awakens within me.  
Now and always I am free.

# The Mother: Compassion

*Tenzin Gyatso, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama of Tibet expresses a lesson of the Mother aspect of the Goddess with his famous quote: "My religion is simple. My religion is kindness."*

The Mother aspect of the Great Goddess is perhaps the most well known. After all, we all have mothers and are typically familiar with the qualities of a healthy mother-figure regardless of our own individual upbringings.

Hundreds of images of the Mother Goddess have been found that date back to the Stone Age. Characteristics of motherhood and fertility are commonly found in their design as they bare exaggerated breasts and bellies. The exaggerated belly conceptualizes qualities of the womb - creation, protection, etc. - as something present in the "creator" and something to be harnessed within oneself. In turn, the engorged breasts illustrate that nourishment is a necessity for all living things and is able to be provided only by other living things.

In myth the Mother appears to have many characteristics, but the most common are those associated with creation and nourishment. She is often seen as the Earth itself, producing and giving freely of the things that her children need to survive.

As with the Maiden, the Mother is not only found within beings who are physical mothers. She is in all things at all times regardless of fertility, gender, or age. Every person contains an "Inner Mother" - an aspect of themselves that is capable of unconditional love.

The Mother aspect of the Goddess is the Teacher of Compassion. After going through the processes and revelations brought on by embracing the Maiden within, the Mother suddenly surfaces and begins to take the reigns.

As you learn to remove judgment and accept Oneness you may begin to notice her voice inside your head, urging you to find compassion for that boss that drives you crazy or the clerk at the grocery store who seems to be taking too much time out of your day. The Mother teaches us to love all people and all life.

One of the most valuable lessons of the Mother is compassion for self. This falls right in line with the concept of non-judgment of self. The Maiden removes judgment and the Mother replaces it with compassion. She teaches you to love yourself the way she loves you; the way a healthy mother loves.

The “darker” (for lack of a better word) side of the Mother is one of destruction. She is willing to consume life back into herself when necessary while teaching us that death has a purpose as a part of life.

The Mother is also the archetype of a fierce protector who will defend the lives of her children with her last breath. In this way we understand that life should be fought for and defended.

The Mother is connected with the traditional interpretations of the element of Fire. All of the elements can cause transformation, but fire is extremely strong transformational energy; fueled by passionate emotion while destroying and creating all at once. Fire is the primeval force of creation. Where as the Maiden provides inspiration, the Mother takes those ideas and molds them in her fire, like a blacksmith with a fine sword, and gives them life.

The Mother can be felt with the heat of the summer sun or the warmth of your hearth. Allow her into your heart and she will show you the infinite possibilities that come with the presence of unconditional love, kindness, and compassion.



## **Affirmation of the Mother**

This affirmation can be used daily to fill you heart and spirit with the unconditional compassion of the Mother. Put it somewhere where you will see it often or memorize it for later use.

*Ancient Mother,  
Your spirit is the creating force of love  
That nourishes and perpetuates life.  
Let my heart be filled with your patience,  
And your endless compassion for all things.  
I rest always within your eternal embrace.*

## **A Journey with the Mother**

Sit in a comfortable, quiet place. Light candles, incense, or anything that may set the mood for you. You may choose to listen to soft, soothing music.

You begin on a wooded path, the same path that you walked to find the Maiden. Except this time the path is lined with red roses of every shape and variety. There are growing things everywhere; bushes and shrubs, trees and flowering herbs. The sweet smell of summer is in the air.

Overhead the sun is high and bursting with heat. The heat is not oppressive and the thick canopy of trees above shields you from the directness of its light. You are comfortable and warm.

Animals move and make sounds nearby. Beside you is a doe grazing on the forest greens. She stares at you with big brown eyes and welcomes you in her silent way.

As you walk the path take the time to investigate your surroundings. Remember that time has no meaning in this place and that you are free to roam the wilderness around you.

Finally you come to the familiar gate in front of the cottage. They are now both covered in blossoms of every shade of red. Remove the trappings of your daily life and leave them at the gate before pushing it open to step into the garden of the Goddess.

You have just closed the gate behind you when a woman opens the door of the cottage. As she steps over the threshold she greets with a smile and a little nod of her head. You feel a pleasant warmth spread over you and you send her a smile in return.

She wears a gown the color of the roses around her with hints of deep green that match her eyes. Her hair is tied up in a bun behind her head and her belly is swollen with new life.

You remain where you are as the woman walks towards you. Her eyes sweep over you from head to feet.

When she is standing directly in front of you her eyes lock onto yours and she peers deep into your spirit, into who you truly are. Do you hide anything from her? Is there something you don't want her to know?

After a moment she puts her hand to your cheek and smiles with her eyes. She puts her arms around you and pulls your head gently to rest on her chest. Do you resist this contact or do you let the Mother embrace you as a child that has come home? She pulls you up again, her hands resting on your shoulders, and says:

*"I accept you exactly the way you are. I love you as I have always loved you; unconditionally and as your mother. I will always be in this place, waiting for your visits, but know also that I am always within you for we are one spirit."*

Talk for a time with the Lady. Go into the cottage if you like. After all, this is your house; your mother's house.

Stay for a while and let your mother teach you what she knows or just lounge in the safety of your spiritual home.

When you are ready to leave, embrace the Mother and promise to return. Take only what you need from the gate before returning to the path. Walk back at your leisure allowing your consciousness to surface slowly.

### **Embracing the Mother Ritual**

You will need at least one candle, your favorite incense, and a mirror. A full length mirror would be perfect but any mirror will do. If possible the ritual should be performed at the peak of the full moon, before the moon begins to wane.

This ritual can be easily done in the bathroom after a nice cleansing bath. In fact, the bathroom may actually be the best place since you should be unclothed as you were for the Maiden ritual.

Why so much nakedness? Well, the purposes of these short, sweet, and simple rituals are geared towards the self. When you are naked there is nothing to define you but you. There are no stylish shoes, designer tops, etc. There is only you.

Now, if you choose to take a ritual bath add some herbs or oils to the water that are symbolic of or remind you of the Mother. You might choose to use the meditation you read earlier and journey with the Mother while bathing.

When you get out of the bath take your time to towel off slowly, put on moisturizer, etc. Take care of yourself. The candles and incense could have already been lit while you were in the bath. If they are not get them going now.

Invite the Mother in your own words. You can choose to be specific or call upon the Mother aspect of the Great Goddess.

Stand before the mirror without clothes on. If you have long hair tie it back so you can see the whole of your face. While gazing in the mirror recite the following:

*Nourishing Mother, allow me to find compassion for myself so that I may accept my flaws and move past them. May I be successful in creating the self and the life I desire. You are always with me and I am always home.*

Get dressed and go outside to be with the earth and the moon. Bring your candle with you or light a small fire in a barbeque or outdoor fire pit.

The ritual is ended here. Be sure to make note of your experiences in your journal.

### **Prayers and Chants of the Mother**

I.

Mother Goddess,  
Warming flame of compassion,  
I embrace you within myself,  
And dance with you 'round the fire.  
Let me be a protector of life,  
And a bringer of peace.  
My heart sings your melody  
And my spirit is forever loved.

II.

Demeter of the grain,  
Loving Earth Mother,  
Mysterious Queen of Eleusis,  
Let your light surround me and be within me.  
May all hate be forgotten.  
May all love be restored.  
Mother Demeter, bless me with your gifts.

III.

Mother of Summer,  
All blooming Dame,  
I am your heart's drummer.  
And the carrier of your flame.

IV.

The Mother awakens within me.  
Now and always I know love.

## The Crone: Wisdom

The old hag at her cauldron is perhaps the most enduring image of the Wise Woman and a remnant of a time when women were the healers of their communities. They were shamans, witches, midwives, medicine women, and priestesses of the Goddess.

The Crone is a symbol of inherent wisdom that comes from experience. She has lived through love, sorrow, hope, and fear, coming out of it all a wise and confident spirit. Through these experiences she has learned the secrets of life and death and of the mysteries beyond this world. She has tasted death itself and watched those she loved make the journey before her. It is through her mourning that she faces death, grows to understand it, and becomes the gatekeeper between worlds.

The wisdom of the Crone comes only after learning the lessons of non-judgment and compassion. Through these lessons the Crone becomes the balancing scales between light and dark and between life and death. She is selfless, yet she loves herself. She is kind, yet she knows when to be harsh. She is free, she is compassionate, and she is wise. Only the Crone can complete the journey to the Otherworld and birth the Child of Completion.

The Crone is full of power. Her body is no longer fertile, but her mind is sharp and able. She no longer bleeds, keeping her power within her and owning it without shame or fear.

She is often seen as a healer, working in tune with Nature to cure ailments and guide those ready to leave or enter this world. She is the elder priestess of the Goddess; the Grandmother whose words are few yet priceless in their wisdom.

In myth the Crone is often seen as something to be feared. She is a representation of death and its mysteries.

Things that are unknown are always feared, thus we work to know the Crone; to understand her wisdom and beckon her to impart the mysteries upon us. We surrender our fear and ignorance to the Crone and let her strike these overpowering influences down as a stalk of wheat with her shining sickle.

As with all aspects of the Goddess the Crone is not only found within the aged. She is in all beings at all times. She can be present in men and women, young and old; though age may very likely come before her lessons are fully realized.

The Crone is a cleansing force that sweeps through the world carrying away those whose time to live is done to make room for new life. She is associated with the element of water and the direction of west – land of the dead. She is the necessary force of destruction like the force of a wave on the shore; ripping away the beach and returning it to the sea from which it came.

She is the reaper, the comforter, the mysterious old woman who possesses the knowledge of all worlds. The next time a thunderstorm passes overhead take a moment to listen to the voice of the Crone. Feel the tears of joy and mourning fall upon your head and take the first steps to understand her mysteries.

### **Affirmation of the Crone**

Use these words to infuse yourself with the Crone's wisdom.

*Ancient Crone,  
You are the source of eternal knowledge  
That leads to the completion of the spirit.  
Let my soul seek your lessons,  
And strive to understand your mysteries.  
I will not fear the darkness  
For I know you wait for me within it.*

## A Journey with the Crone

Prepare yourself as you have for the other journeys. Light incense or play soft music if this is helpful to you.

You begin, as always, on that familiar path. Look up through the now thinning branches of the trees into the night sky. The waning moon hangs overhead, it's sickle shape bright and surrounded by millions of stars.

It is hard to see anything along the path. Shadows take up much of the spaces where flowers once grew. If you look hard enough you may see a healing plant or two tucked in along the path. Take your time and explore a little. You are not afraid.

Animals of the night move in the forest around you. An owl can be heard in the distance asking her eternal question. She wants to know who you are. Can you tell her or are you unsure of yourself?

As you walk up to the gate you see that it is now covered with dying vines, dried up and withered. Leave the baggage of your mundane life on the ground and push it open to approach the cottage.

You can see smoke rippling out of the chimney and the windows are glowing with a welcoming light. Walk to the door and enter.

Bent over the hearth is an old woman wearing a dark cloak with the hood pulled up over her grey hair. When you enter she turns to you, pays you half a glance, and silently gestures for you to sit by the fire. She has been expecting you.

You watch her work in her cauldron, grabbing bundles of herbs from the mantle to add to her brew. After a moment she takes a seat beside you and pulls her hood down to expose her time weathered face.

She turns to you and in her hand is a cup of the brew she has been tending. She offers it to you and says:



*"I am the grandmother of mysteries. You have come to this place seeking wisdom. Drink from this cup and learn all that you need to know at this time."*

You take the hot cup and drink deeply from it. What knowledge comes into your mind as the bittersweet liquid passes over your lips? Is anything foggy? Are there things that are not clear to you still?

Speak with the Crone for a time. Spend time with her and learn from her timeless experience.

When you are ready to leave embrace your grandmother and return to the gate. Take only what you need before returning down the path and allowing your consciousness to surface slowly.

### **Embracing the Crone Ritual**

You will need a dark or silver colored bowl of water, your favorite incense, and a candle. Get everything prepared and find a quiet place to sit alone.

This ritual should be done as closely as possible to the last quarter – the waning moon.

Invite the Crone in your own words. You may choose to use a specific Crone Goddess if you like or simply call on the Crone aspect of the Great Goddess.

Now might be a good time to use the Crone meditation you read earlier. Either way, quiet your mind and ground yourself in whatever way works for you. Recite the following words:

*Ancient Crone, allow me to find wisdom within myself and to always remember that your lessons are within me waiting to be revealed. May I strive to understand all that is light and dark without fear.*

The bowl of water represents a portal between this world and the Otherworld. When you are ready, relax the focus of your eyes and gaze into the surface of the water. Stare at it as long as you can allowing yourself to “daydream” into the water.

Make note of shapes, letters, images, etc. that you see on the surface of the water. Later you may want to do some research and soul searching to find out what these things mean.

When you are done scrying thank the Crone in your own words and drip some of the water over your hands and face. Pay special attention to the area of your third eye—on your forehead between your eyes.

The ritual is ended here. You may choose to go outside and gaze at the waning moon and be with the Crone.

### **Prayers and Chants of the Crone**

I.

Ancient Crone,  
Cleansing waters of wisdom,  
I embrace you within myself,  
And dance with you ‘round the well.  
Let me be a seeker of knowledge,  
And courageous in the face of darkness.  
My heart sings your melody  
And my spirit is forever whole.

II.

Cerridwyn of the Cauldron,  
Timeless Grandmother,  
Shape shifting Queen of mysteries,  
Let your wisdom surround me and be within me.  
Reap away my fear and ignorance.  
Lady Crone, bless me with your gifts.

III.

Lady of Autumn,  
Fading blossom of Samhain,  
I am your heart's drummer  
And forever your student.

IV.

The Crone awakens within me.  
Now and always I seek wisdom.

# Stories of the Goddess

## **Preface: (Spoken before each story.)**

In ancient times they carved her words in stone: "I am the Great Mother, Maker and Giver of all life. I am all that has been, all that is, and all that ever will be. In my body is life everlasting."

In the beginning was the Goddess; being completely female, completely male, completely balanced, completely whole.

Unto her were born the land, the sea, and the sky; the heat of the flaming sun, and the bright shining orb of the moon among an ocean of stars.

She brought forth the plants and trees, the flying ones, the life of the waters, and all manner of breathing creature.

She gave birth to sons and daughters in her own image who were the children of Nature. In time they developed culture, and the ability to create as she creates.

The Goddess is all things, the source of all that lives, and unto her all things must return.

It is her lessons we have come to speak of. It is her lessons that are taught to us by the living force of Nature. And so by honoring the cycles of Nature we worship her and seek to know her mysteries.

## **Winter Solstice/Yule**

The Winter Solstice is a time of completion; a time of ending and of new beginnings.

Since the Crone's journey at Samhain she has been waiting in the Otherworld with the Child of Light growing within her womb.

She has waited with her sisters, the Maiden and the Mother. On this night, the longest night of the year, they will work together to bring light back to the earth. Soon, like the Solstice wreath, the circle will soon be complete.

Within the chill of Midwinter the aging Goddess labors in childbed. Her cries are those of the Earth itself, frozen in the silence of winter's slumber.

She fights to bring her child into the world. Her sisters, the Maiden and the Mother, attend to her as midwives, speaking in soothing tones and wiping her forehead lovingly. They have all, in turn, carried this child. Only the Crone, with the help of her sisters, can bring the pregnancy to completion. They have come to be together for the last quarter of the year to nourish each other's spirits and witness this special birth.

The Crone's wrinkled face contorts and she clenches her tired eyes in a final effort. Suddenly the laboring woman's cries are quieted and a child enters the world.

Tears of joy spread like ocean waves against a sandy shore. The child is the Goddess reborn, the culmination of a year's worth of work and the total sum of the three aspects in one.

With the birth of this child comes the birth of the Sun. The Light has returned to the Earth and with it comes the promise of renewal.

The evergreen is a symbol of this season because like the Goddess it is eternal. The evergreen reminds us that the Goddess is life everlasting, the ever-renewing force of creation and life.

The Holly and the Ivy, with berries red as the Mother's blood, are also symbols of the season. Strung in a wreath they are yet more reminders of the eternal cycles of nature and our Mother the Great Goddess.

At this season we give gifts to honor the divine spirit of the Goddess in each of us, to recall that in all things the

Goddess is complete. We come together to sing back the Light and feast in friendship; to remember the promise of rebirth, and to know that joy is never beyond our reach.

### **Imbolc/High Winter**

Amidst the darkness of winter the young Goddess stirs and awakens from her time of dreaming.

The Maiden pokes her head up through the frozen ground, looks around, and takes in that which she has dreamed into existence.

Her feet step down onto the sacred earth and the life beneath it stirs as she stirred; awakens as she awakened.

All the earth has awaited this moment. It is the return of the Maiden Goddess and the promise of spring.

With the return of the Goddess comes the growth of the light which was born at the Winter Solstice. Animals rouse from their winter beds to seek mates and begin bringing new life into the world. Under a cold blanket of snow life is reaching the surface as young green shoots of vegetation break through the soil.

Candles are a symbol of this time and an offering of light. When we offer light we offer:

*The ability to see that which can not always be seen.  
Knowledge which can only be known through first knowing  
darkness.*

*Warmth in times of cold and harshness.*

*The nourishment required for growth.*

*The light of the spirit which binds all living things to one another.*

All of these things we offer to the Goddess, but also to each other.

In older times candles were lit and left in windows to show travelers the way home. May our flames act as a

welcoming beacon, showing the Goddess where her people await her return.

We gather now to circle together in honor of the Goddess, the Lady of Light and Life. We gather now to light our individual flames from the same source and to hold them high in the creation of a single radiant glow.

We welcome the Holy Maiden back to the earth. May her light shine on us all and bring the fertile promise of renewal.

### **Vernal Equinox/Ostara**

It is the season of spring and life is placing its hold on the earth once more. It is planting time, a hopeful time of renewal for all things.

The Maiden Goddess is at the peak of her power, both physically and spiritually. She is the seed and the soil, the planter and the planted. She is the Initiator, the Free Spirit, and the Holy Virgin.

At this time the Goddess seeks a mate and finds one in the Horned Lord who is a Son of Nature, a Keeper of Life, and a Man of the Goddess.

They are drawn to each other in a cosmic dance older than time itself. He is of her and one with her in spirit. She invites him now to become one with her in body as well.

The Goddess and her Stag-Horned Consort come together at this season of balance to learn about love and to create the child of light which will be reborn at the Winter Solstice.

With their joining new life enters the world, symbolized by the festive eggs and blooming flowers on our altars. The flames of our candles represent the sun which will continue to grow warm and heat the Earth, encouraging

growth throughout the coming months. We also offer water, a representation of the cleansing and nourishing rains of the season.

We gather now in this sacred space to circle together in honor of the Goddess, the Lady of Light and Life. We gather to celebrate the beginning of spring and to rejoice in the joining of the Maiden and her Consort. May the light of their love shine on us all and bring the fertile promise of renewal.

### **Beltane/High Spring**

Fires burn bright on this night. The Mother, with a growing child in her belly, looks to celebrate the love she has found in the God and the creation they have stirred.

The first spring flowers have opened their faces to the growing sun, trees are becoming full and green, and life is steadily returning from below the ground. Bird song fills the air again. They beckon us to join them in celebration of High Spring.

This is the last of the seed time when the focus changes from a time of planting to a time of growth. The theme of fertility is carried throughout this season and rituals and prayers are made to perpetuate growth in the physical world as well as in the spiritual.

Beltane is a time of celebrating the pleasures of the body; of the combining of matter and spirit. Know that you are both of these things; that you are temporarily flesh yet eternally divine. Come before the Goddess as you are, without judgment or fear, and she will accept you unconditionally.

The Goddess now transitions from her Maiden aspect to that of the Mother. She is ever aware of the growing child within her that carries with it endless possibilities and the potential for Completion.



She calls for us to join with her this night, to marry our bodies and spirits with her spirit and to celebrate this joining in our own human ways; with song, dance, feasting, friendship, and love.

She will dance beside us in our circle, her voice will join ours on the wind; she will laugh and rejoice with us. And when the sun retreats into the night she will find a quiet place to tend the flames of passion.

At Beltane the Goddess teaches us to cherish our physical nature, to relish in being true to ourselves, and to be without shame before her. She teaches us that there is nothing sinful about being a human being, that passion is something to be embraced, and that we are all her beloved children.

### **Summer Solstice/Midsummer**

Love is the most powerful force in existence. It can quite literally bring change in an instant. Without it there would be no desire to create and nurture, thus there would be no life.

Today, at the beginning of Summer, the Mother Goddess comes to the height of her power as does the sun above us. She has reached this pinnacle through the strength of love. It is love for her Consort, for the child growing within her, and for all of Creation.

As her love and her belly have grown so too has the earth become green and full of life. Flowers bloom all around us and the animals have come together in the fields to mate and multiply. Life is everywhere we look.

The Goddess has reached the peak of her potential and realized her compassion for all life. She loves all things as a healthy mother loves her children; selflessly and without condition. This is the love she holds within her heart for each of us.

In recognition of this peak of life and love fires are lit all over the world. Tradition tells us that this is the favored day of the fairies and that they troop around the land searching for beautiful mortals to take away with them.

Roses are symbols of the Mother Goddess. They are placed on altars along side rayed flowers and sun wheels which honor the height of the sun.

This is a time of fire—the most creative and destructive force known. The same qualities can also be given to the force of love.

Because a peak has been reached now there must be a decline. This does not mean the lessons of compassion will be forgotten or wane. The decline means that now something else must come into focus to join those lessons.

Midsummer is a time of celebration and joy, as are all times in the Goddess's circle. But with that joy comes the knowledge that this too shall end only to begin again—that impermanence is the nature of all things.

Let us rejoice now in the warmth of summer and in the light at its highest point. Let us live in this moment, and this moment only, so that we might relish in the love of the Goddess and learn compassion for all life and all beings.

### **Lughnasadh/High Summer**

In Ireland and much of the ancient Celtic world Lughnasadh was a time of feasting and sport in honor of the Goddess. Much like the Olympic games of Greece, people from all over would come to compete and celebrate.

These games were held to not only honor the Goddess but to bring people together in preparation for the first of the harvest—a time of hard work, community, and bounty. Gaming was a respite from working the crops and a last embrace of the warmth of the sun before autumn took hold of the earth and the colder months returned.

Today the Crone takes to her throne and comes again to bring about the harvest time. She is at the beginning of her reign and as such is still striving towards the wisdom of Completion.

The Horned Lord, Consort of the Goddess, now begins to exhibit his decline. Perhaps he takes a fatal blow while competing for his Lady or perhaps his body is simply giving out with age. This event will bring the Crone the first of her lessons.

She must now be a caregiver and a guardian to her lover. She will watch over him throughout the season and see the strength steadily wane from him.

The God is the symbol of the first harvest fruits and the Crone Goddess is the reaper that must cut him down. She must come to understand that all things must die in their time and nothing can prevent this law of nature from being observed.

The Goddess is with you always—in times of joy and in times of sorrow. She is the eternal caregiver, the nurse at every bedside, and the silent harbinger of death. She will not abandon you in your time of need nor become overwhelmed with the weight of your troubles. She is ever present in all things, within you and without. Remember that you are never alone.

Today we come together to remember the lessons of the Crone Goddess and to gather as our people did in older days to worship the bounty of the earth. Feel the sun on your skin, taste the first fruits of the season, and remember your eternal connection to the earth and to the Goddess.

### **Autumn Equinox/Mabon**

The Horned God is dead. Throughout his sickness the Goddess has been working to understand death so that she might open the gate between the worlds and guide her lover

through them to begin the process of rebirth. With the death of the God there is mourning and with it comes understanding. Through the darkness is found light.

At this time of the Second Harvest the lessons of life, death, and rebirth are coming into focus. The earth is teaching us that without death there is no life and without life there is no death. These two concepts, so often seen as a polarity, have become one. There is no separation between life and death—there is no separation between anything.

The Autumn Equinox is traditionally a time of Thanksgiving. We thank the Earth—the Goddess— for sacrificing her bounty; for destroying part of herself to give another part of herself the chance to thrive. We are grateful for that chance.

The Crone will spend this season alone in quiet reflection, learning, and attaining the Completion that comes from understanding the Mysteries. She will seek to learn these Mysteries in order to join her lover in the Otherworld and to gain the knowledge to open the gates for all lost souls.

Her transformation begins with death and then begins again with new life—with rebirth. As we move through this circle tonight we will beckon the Crone to impart her lessons upon us—to transform us in her very image and to remind us of the never ending cycle of birth, life, death, and rebirth.

### **Samhain/High Autumn**

This is a night of spirits. The veil that separates this world from the Otherworld has thinned allowing those who have lived before to walk among us. We beckon them with burning flames, welcome them at our tables, and commune with them in our sacred circles.

The Crone has made her journey to the Otherworld. She has succeeded in learning the Mysteries and can now open the gates to welcome home all wandering souls. Our burning candles light their path and speed their journey back to Her womb.

This time of year finds the Crone Goddess joining her other aspects, the Maiden and the Mother, in the Otherworld to usher in the time of the All Goddess—the time of Completion. They will stay together through the Winter Solstice when the Crone will birth back the light and begin the year again.

Samhain or High Autumn is the traditional time of the Celtic New Year. This is a time of endings and new beginnings. While we honor our dead, we also celebrate new life and the living.

The theme of transformation is carried into this season. Samhain is the last of the harvest time; when the last of the grain is reaped, thus ending the old planting cycle and beginning anew.

Tonight, as the veil thins, we are in the company of our ancestors. Let's remember them now and realize that because their lives ended new lives began. When the veil closes again all wandering souls will return to Otherworld with the Crone Goddess waiting for them at the gates and calling them home. To all of them we say "safe journey" until Samhain comes again.

# Voices of the Goddess

This section includes the Charge of the Goddess and “Echoes” for use in moon rituals. Echoes are used like litanies with one or more priest/ess reciting the verses while the entire circle recites the response.

You’ll notice that the opening and closing verses are the same. This is purposeful so that everyone knows when the echoes are coming and ending.

The echoes can also be recited into a high energy chant for a period of building energy during ritual.

## **The Charge of the Goddess**

(Traditional by Doreen Valiente as adapted by Starhawk)

**Listen to the words of the Great Mother,  
Who of old was called Artemis, Astarte, Dione, Melusine,  
Aphrodite, Cerridwen, Diana, Arionrhod, Brigid, and by  
many other names:**

Whenever you have need of anything,  
once in the month, and better it be when the moon is full,  
you shall assemble in some secret place  
and adore the spirit of Me Who is Queen of all the Wise.

You shall be free from slavery,  
and as a sign that you be free  
you shall be naked in your rites.

Sing, feast, dance, make music and love,  
all in My Presence,  
for Mine is the ecstasy of the spirit  
and Mine also is joy on earth.  
For My law is love is unto all beings.

Mine is the secret that opens the door of youth,  
and Mine is the cup of wine of life  
that is the cauldron of Cerridwen,  
that is the holy grail of immortality.

I give the knowledge of the spirit eternal,  
and beyond death I give peace and freedom  
and reunion with those that have gone before.

Nor do I demand aught of sacrifice,  
for behold, I am the Mother of all things  
and My love is poured out upon the earth.

**Hear the words of the Star Goddess,  
the dust of Whose feet are the hosts of Heaven,  
whose body encircles the universe:**

I Who am the beauty of the green earth  
and the white moon among the stars  
and the mysteries of the waters,  
I call upon your soul to arise and come unto me.  
For I am the soul of nature that gives life to the universe.  
From Me all things proceed and unto Me they must return.

Let My worship be in the heart that rejoices,  
for behold, all acts of love and pleasure are My rituals.  
Let there be beauty and strength, power and compassion,  
honor and humility, mirth and reverence within you.

And you who seek to know Me,  
know that the seeking and yearning will avail you not,  
unless you know the Mystery: for if that which you seek,  
you find not within yourself, you will never find it without.  
For behold, I have been with you from the beginning,  
and I am That which is attained at the end of desire.

## Waxing Moon/Maiden Moon Echoes

“Know that the power of the moon is the power of the spirit.”

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.

“It is through this power that we learn of ourselves and the mysteries of the Goddess.”

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.

“With new birth comes new lessons.”

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.

“Now is the time of the Maiden Goddess...”

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.

“...a time of beginnings where the lessons we have learned become known.

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.

“The Maiden Moon is the revealer and the freer of the spirit.”

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.

“The Maiden Moon destroys our darkness...”

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.



“and transforms it into freedom.”

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.

“We look within, into our spirits, to learn her lessons and seek wisdom.”

Response: The Maiden is free. The Goddess rises.

### **Full Moon/Mother Moon Echoes**

“Know that the power of the moon is the power of the spirit.”

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“It is through this power that we learn of ourselves and the mysteries of the Goddess.”

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“With growth comes maturity and a better understanding of ourselves.”

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“Now is the time of the Mother Goddess...”

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“...a time that is ripe with the potential to create something new.

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“The Mother Moon nourishes our spirits.

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“She replaces the shadows with light and love...

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“and fills us with the compassion for ourselves and all life.”

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“We look within, into our spirits, to learn her lessons and seek wisdom.”

Response: The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

### **Waning Moon/Crone Moon**

“Know that the power of the moon is the power of the spirit.”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

“It is through this power that we learn of ourselves and the mysteries of the Goddess.”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

“With death comes rebirth.”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

“Now is the time of the Crone Goddess...”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

“...a time of endings—yet new beginnings where we find the wisdom to reach Completion.”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

“The Crone Moon is the shining sickle of death.”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

“She cuts down the ego of self...”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

“and gifts our spirits with true wisdom.”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

“We look within, into our spirits, to learn her lessons and seek wisdom.”

Response: The Crone is wise. The Goddess rises.

### **New Moon/Panthea (All Goddess) Moon**

“Know that the power of the moon is the power of the spirit.”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

“It is through this power that we learn of ourselves and the mysteries of the Goddess.”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

“It is in the darkness that we see our true selves.”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

“Now is the time of the All Goddess...”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

“...a time of darkness in which we prepare to look within in order to find that which is without.”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

“The Dark Moon is the mirror which illuminates the truth we hold within.”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

“The Dark Moon teaches us about manifestation, transformation, and rebirth.”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

“Though we can not see her, we know she is there.”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

“We look within, into our spirits, to learn her lessons and seek wisdom.”

Response: She is complete. The Goddess rises.

# Virtues of the Goddess - Correspondences

## **Maiden**

Inner attribute: Freedom

Outer attributes: Birth/Beginnings

Dark attribute: She Who Reveals

Chakras: base, sacral

Season: Spring

Holidays: High Winter, Vernal Equinox

Element: Air

Quarter: East

Moon Phase: Waxing, First Quarter

## **Mother**

Inner attribute: Compassion

Outer attributes: Life/Creation

Dark attribute: She Who Protects

Chakras: solar plexus, heart

Season: Summer

Holidays: High Spring, Summer Solstice

Element: Fire

Quarter: South

Moon Phase: Full

## **Crone**

Inner attribute: Wisdom

Outer attributes: Death/Transformation

Dark attribute: She Who Consumes

Chakras: throat, brow

Season: Autumn

Holidays: High Summer, Autumnal Equinox

Element: Water

Quarter: West

Moon Phase: Waning, Last Quarter

## **All Goddess**

Inner attribute: Consciousness (Light)

Outer attributes: Rebirth/Balance

Dark attribute: Consciousness (Darkness)

Chakra: Crown

Season: Winter

Holidays: High Autumn, Winter Solstice

Element: Earth

Quarter: North

Moon Phase: Dark

## **Spirit – Creation**

We and all that lives and breathes is represented by the element of Spirit, the direction of Center, and the top point of the Star of Venus (the pentacle). We are the Knowing Ones, we are the Goddess—as are all things in existence.







PART THREE

# Ritual & Practice



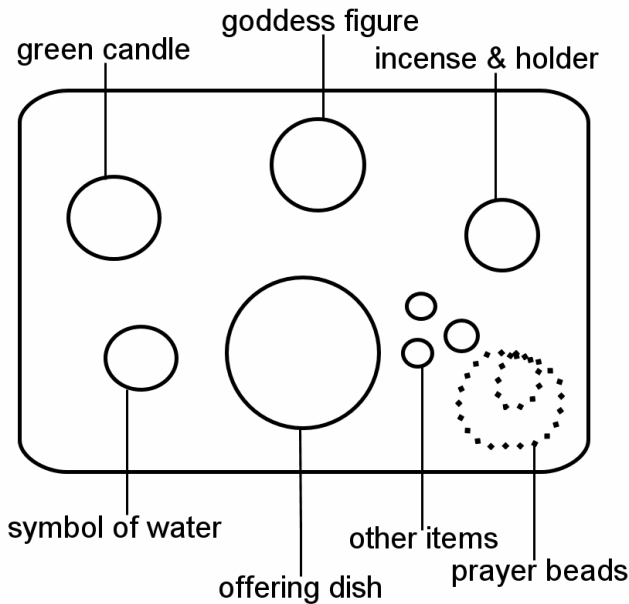


# The Altar and Daily Practice

Wherever you can manage to place a permanent altar within your home do so, regardless of which direction it faces. The below diagram is a simple suggested layout for those who need a visual guide.

Some believe that the practice of worship implies that the practitioner is affirming a lesser-ness to the deity being worshipped. This is not so of the Tridean Tradition. We do not worship the Goddess as something that is only outside of ourselves. She is within and without, above and below.

Remember that you are divine and the Goddess is always within you. You and all things are physical manifestations of the Goddess. Ritual and daily practice or worship is a way to remember this, to perpetuate Oneness, and to connect with the higher consciousness of the Great Goddess.



## THE ALTAR FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

**Note:** All ritual items should be cleaned when first acquired and regularly afterwards. Salt water or an herbal infusion (tea) of Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) can be used to cleanse ritual items after an initial cleaning with soap and water.

### **Symbol of Water**

The other three elements are represented on the altar so it is fitting to include a permanent symbol of water when you are not making an offering of liquids.

Pets and children can disturb open containers of water. Seashells or a corked bottle of water or Mugwort tea are sensible alternatives to what can be a messy situation.

### **Green Pillar Candle**

Using a large pillar candle is effective because the candle not only lasts longer than a smaller votive or tea-light, but you can continue to use the energy of your candle once it is burned by placing a new pillar in the center of its leftover wax. The color Green is chosen for its connection with the All Goddess, Nature, and the Earth.

Your candle holder can be as unique as you are. Visit antique shops or flea markets to find something you like. Be sure your candle holder or dish is large enough for your candle to drip on.

Scented candles can be lovely, but make sure the scent of your candle doesn't clash with your incense. This is just meant as a helpful suggestion to prevent aroma induced headaches or distractions.

The candle represents the element of fire and is an offering of light which symbolizes knowledge that can only be gained by first knowing darkness.

## **Goddess Figures**

You should have at least one Goddess figure on your altar, but you may choose to have several. This acts as a symbol of the Goddess to which you may make your offerings, meditate upon, and generally connect with during ritual.

Goddess figures can be purchased or crafted out of clay with your own two hands. Alternately, you may wish to purchase or draw a piece of art that represents the Goddess. Art can be hung behind your altar or framed and propped against the wall that your altar sits on.

## **Incense and Holder**

Certain scents can evoke powerful memories. The way the air smells on a certain day can bring back childhood memories or stir an emotion from long ago. Burning the same variety of incense during rituals can have a similar effect, helping to recall states of consciousness and spiritual emotions.

Incense is burned as a form of offering and helps to create a ritual state of mind. Incense represents the element of air and demonstrates the ability for positive energy, thoughts, and actions to permeate their surroundings with equally positive effects.

## **Prayer Beads**

Your beads can be used much like Buddhists and Hindus use malas while reciting mantras. Catholics use rosaries for a similar purpose. Use them while chanting, reciting prayers, etc. to keep count of repetitions. The beads themselves will retain the memory of the energy your rituals create.

If you would like to craft your own beads you will need 108 beads (or other numbers that are multiples of 9, a sacred number of the Goddess, such as 27, 54, 63, 81, etc.) of similar size and shape and 1 focal bead. Take your time choosing the right beads. You may even want to collect special or interesting beads until you have enough to string together to create a truly unique and meaningful piece of spiritual jewelry. [See Appendix I: Prayer Bead Formulas.]

### **Green Stone and Other Items**

This represents your connection to Goddess and the element of earth. Possible stones: Aventurine, Amazonite, Fluorite, Jade, Malachite.

Other items you may want to include can be Moonstones (sacred to the Goddess) or other stones, feathers, acorns, and other objects found in nature or that have special meaning to you.

### **Offering Dish**

An offering dish can be any container which can hold liquids as well as dry items. Search yard sales or antiques stores for something special and unique, or simply choose a vessel from your local home store that will suit your purpose.

Making offerings is a way to create positive energy and potential through which enlightenment can progress. Each offering item represents its own set of spiritual concepts.

When offerings pile up or begin to rot, as will be the case for organic items, dispose of them to make room for new offerings.

## TYPES OF OFFERINGS:

### **Coins/Money**

Making monetary offerings encourages the spirit of sharing our harvest with those who have less. It reminds us that there are many who are less fortunate than ourselves who deserve our compassion. When money collects over time find a place to donate it like the various charity boxes found in grocery stores or anywhere else you feel is appropriate.

### **Water, Other Liquids**

Water is cleansing and pure. It takes on the shape of anything that it is held within while still remaining to be water. It reminds us to be changeable, yet steady in our belief in the Goddess.

Milk, wine, and juice can also be used as offerings. These items, as well as water, symbolize the nourishing qualities of the Goddess and Nature.

After your ritual is complete water your houseplants or otherwise transfer the energy back to nature by pouring the liquid onto the earth. This is called a libation. Libations have an ancient history in the practice of numerous cultures, many of them Pagan in origin.

### **Fresh Flowers and Herbs**

Fresh flowers are beautiful, full of color, and sweetly scented yet we know they will soon be wilted and rotten. This is a reminder of the impermanence of all things and the connection that all life has to death.

In Goddess Religion death is seen as a sacred transition, not something to be feared. While there is

recognition of impermanence, we also recognize that all things simply change as opposed to ceasing to exist. Everything must die but all things must also be reborn.

Dried herbs and flowers can also be used since we know they were once full of life. Return to nature by placing upon the earth.

### **Food Items (fruits, grains, seeds, etc)**

This combines the awareness of impermanence, the sharing of your harvest, and the nourishing qualities of the Goddess. Leave out for the birds and other wildlife before rot makes the items inedible.



# Basics of Ritual and Etiquette

Have you ever wondered why Pagans cast circles or why the elements are called? Below is some information you might find useful during your first rituals – especially if they are Tridean. It's a big help to know what to expect and what's expected of you before sharing a spiritual experience with a group of people you might barely know.

## **Celebration**

Ritual should be taken seriously. There is no reason to restrain oneself from smiling or a bit of laughter, but there should still be an air of seriousness about the ritual itself. During activities such as singing and dancing the mood often becomes light and celebratory. This is exactly how it is intended to be.

Celebrating life is one of the main focuses of most Pagan practices. The Goddess loves dancing, singing, feasting, love, and all the other many ways to celebrate. Each of these forms of celebration has their time and place.

## **Movements and Miscellaneous**

Walking clockwise or sunwise is done based on personal preference, but it is not a mandatory practice. However, when you are participating in the rituals of other Pagan groups and traditions you should assume that this is done.

It is appropriate to face the elements when they are called and raise one's arms to the Goddess when she is called. If you're in doubt just follow the lead of your priest/ess(es).

Leaving circle is considered rude unless there is an emergency. There is no need to "cut a door". Everyone is

free to go as they choose, though be warned that you may offend members of the group if you leave without warning or reason.

Swearing and off-color language is simply considered rude during ritual. Being polite is important in order to be considerate of another individual's spiritual experience. What might seem funny to you could potential ruin another person's time in Circle.

Remember that what you gain from ritual is up to you. Always ask yourself why you are practicing your faith and why you choose to be part of group ritual.

### **Why We Create Sacred Space**

All places can be places of worship, though the mind benefits greatly from making the distinction between a space of worship and an ordinary space. By declaring your ritual space as sacred you are allowing for shifts in consciousness and moments of spiritual ecstasy.

Creating sacred space can be a simple or elaborate process. In some cases the priest/ess may choose to smudge the area with incense or say ritual words. Others feel that the act of simply casting a circle is all that is needed to create a sacred atmosphere.

In Tridea the preparation of the altar, dressing in ritual clothing, and the casting of the circle is all a part of creating sacred space. Very often the ritual area is cleansed or consecrated by any of the elements and a formal declaration of sacred space is made.

### **Why We Anoint Attendees**

All people are divine and can connect with Deity without the need for an intermediary such as a priest or a priestess. By anointing one another (our ourselves) we

declare this fact and are reminded that our connection to the Goddess is ever present yet our responsibility to maintain.

To anoint the participants of a circle can be a long process, especially if you have a circle with 50 plus people in attendance. One of the easiest and most time effective ways to anoint is to use self anointing. This could be done by the smoke of a bonfire or incense, by marking a symbol of the Goddess on the forehead with oils, or the splashing of water. (Water is sometimes mixed with salt, but be careful of your eyes.) Instead of the priest/ess doing this the participants can do it themselves at stations set up outside the circle.

When priests or priestesses anoint attendees they usually do so with a greeting or a blessing such as *"Welcome and be blessed"* or *"Enter the womb of the Goddess"*.

### **Why We Cast Circles**

When we cast the Circle we are acknowledging Oneness and the sacred cycles of Nature. Through the Circle we learn that nothing truly begins or ends, but continues through eternity. It is a symbol of the ever present promise of rebirth - a concept taught to us by Nature itself. In the Circle there is nothing to fear.

A circle can be cast with people joining hands. This is the most common way to create a circle in Tridea. Starting in the east each person in the circle in turn puts their hand over top of the person to their left (going clockwise) and says *"In love the circle is cast."* When everyone is holding hands the priest/ess then says a few words to "seal" the circle such as *"The circle is cast. So mote it be"* or something similar. As with all ritual practices this can be elaborated on to fit your particular ritual style.

A circle can also be cast by a lone priest/ess or multiple individuals. There are many ways to cast a circle, both elaborate and simple.

## **Why We Call the Elements**

Nature is honored as a sacred guide, our holy writ to be interpreted and learned from. We honor Nature by calling forth the symbolic presence of the elements into ourselves and our circle so that the lessons of Nature may be imparted to us during ritual.

Trideans begin in the east quarter when calling the elements. Some traditions start in the north, and still others have other preferences. Trideans begin in the east because it is associated with the Maiden and beginnings. (See sample rituals in the Appendices for Tridean quarter calls.)

## **Why We Call the Goddess**

Connection with the Goddess is the most important part of ritual. By calling upon her presence we give our desire to know her within and without of ourselves a voice. We also honor and acknowledge the truth of her existence and dedicate ourselves to her through these words and through the practice of ritual.

### **Storytelling and Why the Stories are Recited?**

Stories of the Goddess and the wisdom of Nature are told to teach and remind us of spiritual lessons. We also tell these stories to perpetuate the understanding of the mysteries of the Goddess and to pass on traditions to future generations. (See Stories of the Goddess on page 67.)

## **Why We Sing, Chant, and/or Pray**

Singing, chanting, praying, dancing, etc. are all ways to further establish our connection to the Goddess, Nature, and all things. This is a form of celebration – celebrating life,

our connection to the Goddess, and all that we experience as human beings. Through these acts we also raise energy within ourselves to be directed for certain purposes such as healing. (See the Appendices for examples of chants, songs, and prayers.)

### **Why We Make Offerings**

(See The Altar)

### **Why We End Ritual by Releasing and Opening**

Releasing the Elements and the Goddess and opening the Circle formally ends the ritual. This should be a sign to your subconscious to return to a mundane state as opposed to the heightening ritual state. This will allow you to function regularly in your normal world and facilitate the process of grounding.

To open the circle the exact opposite of the casting is done. Beginning in the east each person puts their hand over the person to their right and says *"In love the circle is opened"*. When this is complete the priest/ess says *"The circle is open but ever unbroken. So mote it be."*

# Connecting Through Nature

## A YEAR OF JOURNALING

Trideans believe that Nature is the “sacred text” through which we can learn the lessons of the Goddess. Nature is tangible. It can be seen, felt, heard, touched, breathed in, and sensed. There is no way to debate the reality of the Natural World. It is all around us at all times.

The Goddess is Nature; the Earth is her body, the wind is her breath, the water is her blood and tears, and the fire is her eternal spirit. Remember that through Oneness the Goddess is all things.

To connect with the Goddess through Nature try to spend some time observing the world around you. What is happening to the Earth? What has the weather been like? How do the birds, bees, squirrels, etc behave? Have the stars been exceptionally bright? What phase is the moon in as you write and reflect?

Compare how you feel, both physically and spiritually, to the weather and the happenings of Nature. For example: has it been very windy? Is the Maiden reaching out to you through the winds - removing the dust of your mind and spirit?

No matter how silly the interpretation may seem, come to some conclusions about what the Goddess may be trying to teach you through Nature.

### **Notes on Journaling**

Stretch, reach, and look deep within yourself during these exercises. If you feel that you have nothing to contribute at any given month, reflect on why that might be. Are the reasons beneficial or harmful? Try to remember that there are reasons for all situations and there is always something to learn even if the lesson is not obvious to you.

The ideas written below are simply prompts to get you started every month. You should certainly not limit the amount of time you spend journaling or the ideas that surface in your mind to these prompts.

If you live in the Southern Hemisphere you will need to reverse the seasonal interpretations. Additionally, if you live somewhere where the seasons don't change that noticeably you should factor that into your thoughts. If the weather is consistently temperate there should still be cycles to observe within the Natural World. The sun still changes, as does the moon. Plants and animals should still follow certain patterns regardless of where you live.

## **January**

Winter is upon us and it is a quiet time. Spend some time in meditation and write an original prayer to the Goddess. Include an explanation of the processes that brought these words to you. Do you feel they were divinely inspired? Do you even believe in divine inspiration?

## **February**

With the coming of High Winter (Imbolc) on February 2<sup>nd</sup> the Goddess will surface to the Earth once more. Beneath the cover of snow life will begin to stir. What is lying in wait within you? Examine yourself and realize that you possess endless potential. What projects or goals have you been dreaming about but have not yet taken action towards attaining? How will you make these desires into reality? Also note your reflections on the Sabbat of High Winter and what it means to you.

## **March**

Spring begins this month and with it the Earth will change to allow for growth. How will you change? What conscious changes can you make to further your spiritual endeavors? What seeds can you plant within yourself to allow for your own personal growth? Do a mental spring cleaning and make note of the things you can add or remove from yourself and your life to perpetuate positive change. Also note your reflections on the Sabbat of the Vernal Equinox or Ostara.

## **April**

While we are in the midst of spring find a way to commune with nature. Discuss alternatives for city dwelling people to connect with the natural world. What are some methods of connection that can be used besides the typical “hike in the woods” scenario? The weather may still be too cold to spend much time outside so discuss ways to connect indoors as well. Why should we spend time connected with Nature? What do we learn by doing this?

## **May**

This is the end of the seed time; the last of the planting months. Have you planted all that you wanted to within yourself? If so, make a concise list of the things you hope will manifest within the coming months. If not, take the time now to meditate and mentally “plant” your own personal seeds of change before creating your list. Put notes next to each item on your list to designate which are very long term goals and which can be attained by the harvest season. Try to have at least one item that can manifest by the last harvest in October. Also note your reflections on the



Sabbat of High Spring or Beltane. Trideans see this Sabbat differently than Wiccans. Discuss this and come to an opinion as to which interpretation makes the most sense to you.

## **June**

The growing time has begun. What has grown so far within you? If this is your first month with journaling how do you plan to grow? Experience beauty in the everyday and learn to see things with new eyes. Find something that is typically considered ugly and find its hidden beauty. Describe the “ugly” thing and explain why to you it can be beautiful. Also note your reflections on the Sabbat of the Summer Solstice or Midsummer/Litha.

## **July**

The harvest will be upon us soon. It is time to make sure those seeds you planted in the spring are growing well. If this is your first month journaling think about something that was planted in the past that is still growing within you. Assess your personal relationships and consciously care for them during this time. Make note of any changes; improvements or declines, in your personal life and ponder why these changes may have occurred.

## **August**

This month marks the time of the first harvest. Are you able to “harvest” anything at this time or are all of your “seeds” still growing? The weather is typically very warm at this time of year and the sun’s decline is not yet noticeable. Ponder for a time what the sun represents to you. It can be harsh and nurturing all at once. Come to a conclusion about

the sun as a symbol of compassion and the Mother Goddess. Why might this be? What other qualities might the sun represent? Also note your reflections of the Sabbat of High Summer or Lughnasadh.

## **September**

Last month began the period of decline or death which we are now in the middle of. Spend some time in meditation then express your feelings on death and what it means as a part of life. This is also the time of the second harvest and of giving thanks. What are you thankful for? Write a "gratitude" entry in your journal, paying special attention to the things you normally take for granted. Also note your reflections on the Sabbat of the Autumnal Equinox or Mabon.

## **October**

This is the season of ancestors and remembrance of those who have gone before. If you have lost someone, recount your feelings of that loss and how it changed you. If you have not lost anyone close to you, reflect on those you come from. Do some simple research on your family members; your grandparents, their parents, and so on. Look into your cultural backgrounds and note what this might mean to you. Also note your reflections on the Sabbat of High Autumn or Samhain.

## **November**

High Autumn (Samhain) marked the beginning of the time of Completion. As the time of the Winter Solstice approaches and the American Holiday Season gets underway, take some time to find real meaning in this time.

What could be some other reasons for the tradition of gift giving? What do the symbols of the season really mean to you?

## **December**

In the Underworld the Goddess is birthing back the light. She is bringing her fully realized self into being. How have you done this year with the seeds you planted and the harvest they have reaped? Is your true self surfacing? Do you feel held back by certain obstacles? Take some time to reflect on the previous year and jot down your feelings. Also note your reflections on the Sabbat of the Winter Solstice or Yule.

## Solitary Rituals of the Moon

The moon is a symbol of the Goddess that represents the self and personal spiritual concepts with an emphasis on the Shamanic practice of inner reflection (what some have called Shadow Work).

Through the month the moon can be seen changing. She waxes, wanes, and appears to die only to be reborn again. Within each of her faces, the moon illustrates a complete path towards the Completion and enlightenment of the Goddess.

During the various phases of the moon there are certain words and prayers that can be used in conjunction with your offering rituals. It's helpful to memorize these words as they may be used in group rituals as well.

During your personal Moon Ritual you may also wish to incorporate meditations, song, dance, etc. Perhaps take a moment to look out your window or go outside to gaze into the surface of the moon. Let your consciousness reach out toward the moon and draw its ancient energy into yourself.

Depending on the phase of the moon the energy you connect with may feel different to you. Make note of this and take some time to figure out what it could mean to you.

You may choose to recite the following prayers as mantras with a set of prayer beads during moon rituals, daily devotion, or at any time or place you feel the need to connect with the Goddess.

### **Waxing Moon**

The New Moon is a symbol of the Maiden Goddess. The Maiden teaches freedom through non-judgment and a realization of Oneness. She is inspiration, the revealer born from the shadows of the Dark Moon. She symbolizes the beginning of awareness and inspires the seeker.

*“Maiden of Freedom,  
Forever Virgin, Holy Bride,  
You are all beginnings  
And the revealing light that is born from shadows.  
Through you all that is good comes to birth.”*

### **Full Moon**

The Full Moon represents the Mother aspect of the Goddess. The Mother teaches compassion for all things. She already contains the knowledge of Oneness through non-judgment and with that knowledge she can see that all life is one life. She loves this one life as she loves her own child and protects it with a fierceness that only a mother can.

*“Mother of Compassion,  
Forever fertile, force of Creation.  
You are growth and strength,  
Nourishing and protecting all that lives.  
Through you the cause of life is served.”*

### **Waning Moon**

The Waning Moon is the symbol of the Crone. The Crone is the culmination of the knowledge gained through knowing freedom through non-judgment and compassion through oneness. She stands at the gateway of death and moves between the worlds. Through her, Completion will be birthed and given form.

*“Crone of Wisdom,  
Keeper of the Cauldron,  
You are the bringer of death  
Without which nothing can be transformed.  
Through you understanding is attained.”*

## Dark Moon

The Dark Moon represents the All Goddess; the sum total of the other three aspects, the completion of all things, and the promise of rebirth. The All Goddess represents your spiritual goal. She is the cycle coming full circle and the symbol of enlightenment. She is the end result and the new beginning.

*“Great Goddess, Lady of Life  
Whose garment is the shining heavens.  
You are the white moon among the stars  
And the beauty of the green earth.  
You are the Completion of the Spirit  
And the Oneness of All Things.  
You are the mystery that if that which we seek  
We find not within  
We will never find it without.  
For you have been here since the beginning  
And you are that which is attained at the end of desire.”*

~ Parts of some prayers are adapted from or inspired by the Charge of the Goddess by Doreen Valiente and works by M.Z. Bradley.

# Group Rituals

The moon is seen as a guide for inner knowledge and as such its lessons can be very personal. Some may choose to celebrate the moon cycles solitary while others enjoy the energy of a group.

Seasonal celebrations are a time of outer reflection. These are times for honoring Nature and seeking the lessons of the Goddess through Nature. Seasonal rituals affirm our connection to the rest of Creation.

The outline below can be used as a guide or adapted for individual use. You should be able to find all of the information needed to craft your own group ritual in this book.

## Group Moon Ritual Outline

- Create Sacred Space with traditional altar setup and offerings
- Anoint attendees or use self anointing
- Introduction (Grounding and Centering may be incorporated here)
- Cast circle
- Call quarters
- Charge of the Goddess
- Voices of the Goddess (depending on Moon phase)/Readings
- Make offerings
- Meditate, chant, recite prayers, sing, drum, dance
- Cakes and ale
- Knowledge share and announcements
- Thank Goddess
- Release quarters
- Open circle

## Seasonal Group Ritual Outline

- Seasonal Group Ritual Outline
- Create Sacred Space (Tridean altar setup with seasonal influence.)
- Anoint attendees or use self anointing
- Welcome/Introduction/Grounding
- Cast circle
- Call quarters
- Call the Goddess
- Stories of the Goddess (with preface)/Readings
- Meditate, chant, recite prayers, sing, drum, dance
- Announcements
- Thank Goddess
- Release quarters
- Open circle
- Feasting and Group Activities







PART FOUR  
Appendices





## Appendix I: Prayer Beads of the Triple Goddess

Start with 18 beads each of white, red, and black. You will also need spacers of silver or gold, depending on what you like. Silver is nice as a color of the Goddess. String them on your fishing line in sets of nine with a spacer in between each. At the end of nine place nine spacers. Continue this until you finish with the black. Add the Divine bead (we use a bead with a spiral design) to finish them off. You will be able to tuck the knot into the Divine bead so that there is no trace of the line. Play with variations of color to create Mother Earth Beads, Greenman Beads, Lady of the Lake Beads, Moon Goddess Beads, etc.

### **Pattern**

9 white, (spacers in between each) 9 smaller spacers, 9 white, (spacers in between each) 9 smaller spacers, 9 red, (spacers in between each) 9 smaller spacers, 9 red, (spacers in between each) 9 smaller spacers, 9 black, (spacers in between each) 9 smaller spacers, 9 black, (spacers in between each) 9 smaller spacers, Divine Bead.

**Prayers** (parts adapted from M.Z. Bradley)

### **To Begin**

Great Goddess, Lady of Life  
Whose garment is the shining heavens,  
You are the white moon among the stars  
And the beauty of the green Earth.  
You are the mystery  
That if that which we seek we find not within  
We will never find it without  
For you have been here since the beginning  
And you are that which is attained at the end of desire.

### **On Spacers**

Goddess, I am looking within  
and I see your light shining.

### **White Beads**

Maiden of Freedom,  
Forever Virgin, Holy Bride.  
You are all beginnings  
And the revealing light within the shadows.  
Through you all that is good comes to birth.

### **Red Beads**

Mother of Compassion,  
Forever fertile, Lady of the forge.  
You are the creating force of love  
And the strength which nourishes all that lives.  
Through you the cause of life is served.

### **Black Beads**

Crone of Wisdom,  
Ancient One, Keeper of the Cauldron.  
You have seen everything, endured everything,  
and given everything.  
You are death  
without which nothing can be transformed.  
Through you understanding is attained.

### **In Closing**

By the power and will of She that is three,  
so mote it be.

### **Alternate Version: Triple Goddess Mala**

A mala is a string of beads used traditionally for mantra chanting by Buddhists. It has 108 beads - which coincidentally breaks down to the number 9 through

numerology. 9 is a sacred number of the Triple Goddess. It can be made of 108 beads of the same color or broken into 36 white beads, 36 red beads, and 36 black beads. Incidentally 36 also breaks down to 9. Use any of the mantras written below or write your own.

## Appendix II: Sample Rituals

The following rituals are printed here with the purpose of giving an example of Tridean rituals. Here you can see Tridean circle casting, quarter calls, Goddess calls, stories, and all the other elements of Tridean ritual put in the proper order to create a successful ritual.

### Tridean Full Moon Ritual

#### **CREATING SACRED SPACE**

Priest/ess sets up altar in the traditional way and cleanses the area with smudging smoke and/or salted water.

Participants quietly enter the circle.

#### **INTRODUCTION (GROUNDING)**

Why do we circle? We circle to connect with the Goddess and with each other. As social creatures we maintain emotional balance by gathering with others of our kind. Because our modern lives can be hectic we set aside specific times to gather together and reaffirm our connections to each other, to Nature, and to the Goddess.

The Moon is a gift from the Goddess. By observing the Moon we understand that there is no end and no beginning. There is only the endless and infinite cycle of life.

Tonight we gather at the time of the Full Moon; a time of great energy. The Moon is a principle symbol of the Goddess, perhaps her earliest image, with a mythology as old as humanity. In connecting with the rhythms of the Moon we can connect with the Goddess herself.



The Moon pulls and affects the water on our planet and the water in our bodies. If you allow yourself you can feel this subtle, yet extremely powerful energy working within you, touching your spirit and reminding you that you are connected to the Goddess and to all things.

## **CASTING THE CIRCLE**

When all are gathered within the circle and the introduction has been spoken the circle may be cast in either the hand over hand method or by the Priest/ess.

“Hand over hand the circle is cast.”

(Participants offer their hand palm up to the person to their right then place their hand palm down over the person's to their left.)

**PRIEST/ESS:** “Great Mother, we come to honor you as your children. May your eternal symbol protect us and allow us to pass between the worlds and into the darkness of your womb. The circle is cast. So mote it be.”

## **CHARGE OF THE GODDESS**

Traditional by Doreen Valiente, as adapted by Starhawk

**Listen to the words of the Great Mother,  
Who of old was called  
Artemis, Astarte, Dione, Melusine, Aphrodite,  
Cerridwen, Diana, Arionrhod, Brigid,  
and by many other names:**

Whenever you have need of anything,  
once a month, and better it be when the moon is full,

you shall assemble in some secret place  
and adore the spirit of Me  
Who is Queen of all the Wise.  
You shall be free from slavery,  
and as a sign that you be free  
you shall be naked in your rites.

Sing, feast, dance, make music and love,  
all in My Presence,  
for Mine is the ecstasy of the spirit  
and Mine also is joy on earth.  
For My law is love is unto all beings.  
Mine is the secret that opens the door of youth,  
and Mine is the cup of wine of life  
that is the cauldron of Cerridwen,  
that is the holy grail of immortality.  
I give the knowledge of the spirit eternal,  
and beyond death I give peace and freedom  
and reunion with those that have gone before.  
Nor do I demand aught of sacrifice,  
for behold, I am the Mother of all things  
and My love is poured out upon the earth.

**Hear the words of the Star Goddess,  
the dust of Whose feet are the hosts of Heaven,  
whose body encircles the universe:**

I Who am the beauty of the green earth  
and the white moon among the stars  
and the mysteries of the waters,  
I call upon your soul to arise and come unto me.  
For I am the soul of nature  
that gives life to the universe.  
From Me all things proceed  
and unto Me they must return.

Let My worship be in the heart that rejoices,  
for behold, all acts of love and pleasure  
are My rituals.  
Let there be beauty and strength,  
power and compassion,  
honor and humility, mirth and reverence within you.  
And you who seek to know Me,  
know that the seeking and yearning  
will avail you not,  
unless you know the Mystery:  
for if that which you seek,  
you find not within yourself,  
you will never find it without.  
For behold, I have been with you from the beginning,  
and I am That which is attained at the end of desire.

## **VOICES OF THE GODDESS – MOTHER**

### **Full Moon/Mother Moon Echoes**

“Know that the power of the moon is the power of the spirit.”

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“It is through this power that we learn of ourselves and the mysteries of the Goddess.”

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“With growth comes maturity and a better understanding of ourselves.”

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“Now is the time of the Mother Goddess...”

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“...a time that is ripe with the potential to create something new.

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“The Mother Moon nourishes our spirits.

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“She replaces the shadows with light and love...”

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“and fills us with the compassion for ourselves and all life.”

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

“We look within, into our spirits, to learn her lessons and seek wisdom.”

**Response:** The Mother is love. The Goddess rises.

## **CHANTS/SONG/ENERGY BUILD**

“Traditionally, the Drawing Down of the Moon is performed by a single Priestess. Tonight and I hope throughout our traditional practices, the Goddess will be awakened in all of us.

Drawing down the power of the Moon does not literally possess your body with the Goddess. She is already within you. But the power of the Moon can awaken that

spark of her spirit within you, shifting your consciousness into a heightened state of being and gifting you with insights beyond what you know now.

While you sing and chant the ancient names of the Goddess open yourself up to the energy present in this room and in the Universe at large. Don't be afraid to let your voice ring out loud. Feel the words move through you and into your heart. Know that you will always be one with the source of all things that is the Great Goddess."

### **Traditional Goddess Chant**

*"Isis, Astarte, Diana, Hecate, Demeter, Kali, Innana"*

### **CAKES AND ALE**

*"Let these cakes and ale represent the bounty of the Goddess and be blessed by her endless spirit. So mote it be."*

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS/SHARING**

Fill with upcoming events and/or interesting information to be shared. This might include the recommendation of a book, a printout of a chant to share, etc.

### **THANKING THE GODDESS**

#### **PRIEST/ESS:**

*"We thank you Great Goddess,  
Lady of the Moon,  
for bestowing your blessings upon us this night. Since the beginning we have been One and you are always with us. So mote it be."*

## OPENING THE CIRCLE

“Hand over hand the circle is opened.”

(Participants offer their hand palm up to the person to their left then place their hand palm down over the person’s to their right.)

**“The circle is open yet ever unbroken. So mote it be.”**

## Tridean High Spring Ritual/Beltane

### CASTING THE CIRCLE

BEFORE INTRO: Hand Over Hand Method:  
Clockwise “IN LOVE THE CIRCLE IS CAST”

**Intro – PS:** “We declare that this is sacred space;  
A place for honoring divinity within and without.  
We form the ancient circle of the Goddess  
to recognize the eternal nature of all things  
within the cycles of birth, life, death, and rebirth.  
So mote it be.”

RESPONSE: SO MOTE IT BE

### INVOKING THE ELEMENTS

**Intro – PS:** “We call forth the elements  
to honor Nature as our Sacred Guide  
And to encourage the wisdom  
of the elements to manifest within us.  
We begin, like the sun, in the east.”

## **EAST**

“Spirits of the East,  
Wild Winged Ones,  
Soaring with freedom,  
By the Air that is the Divine Breath of Life,  
And by the ancient power of the Old Ones,  
I call you to join your kin in this sacred space.  
Lend insight and knowledge to our spirits.  
Spirits of the East, Hail and Welcome”

RESPONSE: HAIL AND WELCOME

## **SOUTH**

“Spirits of the South,  
Fiery, Passionate Ones,  
Flames of transformation,  
By the Fire that is the Divine Spark of Creation,  
And by the ancient power of the Old Ones,  
I call you to join your kin in this sacred space.  
Illuminate and intensify our workings.  
Spirits of the South, Hail and Welcome”

RESPONSE: HAIL AND WELCOME

## **WEST**

“Spirits of the West,  
Cleansing and Pure Ones,  
Bringers of Emotion,  
By the Waters that are our Divine beginnings,  
And by the ancient power of the Old Ones,  
I call you to join your kin in this sacred space.  
Cleanse this circle and bring us clarity.  
Spirits of the West, Hail and Welcome”

RESPONSE: HAIL AND WELCOME

## NORTH

"Spirits of the North,  
Earthen, Green Ones,  
Teachers of Mysteries,  
By the Earth that is the Divine Body of our Mother,  
And by the ancient power of the Old Ones,  
I call you to join your kin in this sacred space.  
Gift this ritual with your stability and strength.  
Spirits of the North, Hail and Welcome"

RESPONSE: HAIL AND WELCOME

## CENTER

"Spirits of the Center,  
Enlightened and Knowing Ones,  
Holders of the Sacred.  
By the Spirit that is the Divine source of all  
And by the ancient power of the Old Ones  
I call you to join your kin in the sacred space.  
Guide this ritual and give it purpose.  
Spirits of the Center,  
Hail and Welcome!"

RESPONSE: HAIL AND WELCOME

## INVOKING THE GODDESS

**Intro – PS:** "We invoke the Goddess to give our desire to know her a voice. We affirm our beliefs and dedicate ourselves to her with these words ."

**PS:** "Great Goddess, Lady of Life  
Whose garment is the shining heavens;  
You are the white moon among the stars  
And the beauty of the green Earth.



You are the Oneness of All Things  
And the Completion of the Spirit  
You are the mystery that if that which we seek  
We find not within we will never find it without  
For you have been with us since the beginning  
And you are that which is attained  
at the end of desire."

## LESSONS, STORIES, READINGS

**Intro – PS:** "We tell stories to remind us of spiritual lessons and to perpetuate the understanding of the mysteries of the Goddess."

### Story Introduction

**PS:** "High Spring or Beltane or is an old Celtic Fire Ritual which celebrates, at the most fundamental level, the warming of the earth. It is the counterpart to Samhain, which celebrates ancestors and the death of the crops. Beltane, in contrast, celebrates the waxing of life – a time to embrace the powers of fertility and sexuality. For the Celts, it was a festival that insured fertility and growth.

In celebration of Beltane, many communities elected a virgin as their "May Queen" to lead marches or songs. To the Celts, she represented the virgin goddess on the eve of her transition from Maiden to Mother. Depending on the time and place, the consort might be named "Jack-in-the-Green" or "Green Man," "May Groom" or "May King." The union of the Queen and her consort symbolized the fertility and restoration of the world.

In our tradition we do not believe that Beltane marks the first mythical coupling of the Goddess and her Consort. We believe that the Goddess is already pregnant and that this is her time of transition from her Maiden aspect to her Mother aspect."

### **Story of the Goddess: Preface**

**PS:** "In ancient times they carved her words in stone: I am the Great Mother, Maker and Giver of all life. I am all that has been, all that is, and all that ever will be. In my body is life everlasting."

In the beginning was the Goddess; being completely female, completely male, completely balanced, completely whole.

Unto her were born the land, the sea, and the sky; the heat of the flaming sun, and the bright shining orb of the moon among an ocean of stars.

She brought forth the plants and trees, the flying ones, the life of the waters, and all manner of breathing creature.

She gave birth to sons and daughters in her own image who were the children of Nature. In time they developed culture, and the ability to create as she creates.

The Goddess is all things, the source of all that lives, and unto her all things must return.

It is her lessons we have come to speak of. It is her lessons that are taught to us by the living force of

Nature. And so through the cycles of Nature do we find the knowledge and worship of her.”

### **Story of the Goddess: At Beltane**

**PS:** “Fires burn bright on this night. The Mother, with a growing child in her belly, looks to celebrate the love she has found in the God and the creation they have stirred.

The first spring flowers have opened their faces to the growing sun, trees are becoming full and green, and life is steadily returning from below the ground. Bird song fills the air again. They beckon us to join them in celebration of High Spring.

This is the last of the seed time when the focus changes from a time of planting to a time of growth. The theme of fertility is carried throughout this season and rituals and prayers are made to perpetuate growth in the physical world as well as in the spiritual.

Beltane is a time of celebrating the pleasures of the body; of the combining of matter and spirit. Know that you are both of these things; that you are eternally divine. Come before the Goddess as you are, without judgment or fear, and she will accept you unconditionally.

The Goddess now transitions from her Maiden aspect to that of the Mother. She is ever aware of the growing child within her that carries with it endless possibilities and the potential for Completion.

She calls for us to join with her this night, to marry our bodies and spirits with her spirit and to celebrate this joining in our own human ways; with song, dance, feasting, friendship, and love.

She will dance beside us in our circle, her voice will join ours on the wind; she will laugh and rejoice with us. And when the sun retreats into the night she will find a quiet place to tend the flames of passion.

At Beltane the Goddess teaches us to cherish our material qualities and be without shame before her. She teaches us that there is nothing sinful about being a human being, that passion is something to be embraced, and that we are all her beloved children."

### **Orphic Hymn to Gaia (edited)**

**PS:** "Oh Goddess, Source of Gods and Mortals,  
All-Fertile, All-Destroying Gaia,  
Mother of All, Who brings forth the bounteous fruits  
and flowers,  
All variety, Maiden  
who anchors the eternal world in our own,  
Immortal, Blessed, crowned with every grace,  
Deep bosomed Earth, sweet plains  
and fields of fragrant grasses in the nurturing rains,  
Around you fly the beauteous stars,  
eternal and divine.  
Come, Blessed Goddess, and hear the prayers of Your  
children."

### **Orphic Hymn to the Earth**

**PS:** "O Goddess, Earth, of Gods and men the source,  
Endowed with fertile, all destroying force;

All-parent, bounding, whose prolific powers,  
Produce a store of beauteous fruits and flowers,  
All-various maid, the eternal world's strong base  
Immortal, blessed, crowned with every grace;  
From whose wide womb, as from an endless root,  
Fruits, many-formed, mature and grateful shoot.  
Deep bosomed, blessed,  
pleased with grassy plains,  
Sweet to the smell, and with prolific rains.  
All flowery creature, centre of the world,  
Around thy orb, the beauteous stars are hurled  
With rapid whirl, eternal and divine,  
Whose frames with matchless skill  
and wisdom shine.  
Come, blessed Goddess, listen to our prayer,  
And make increase of fruits thy constant care;  
With fertile Seasons in thy train, draw near,  
And with propitious mind thy suppliant hear."

### **Drumming/Chant/Energy Building**

(fill with songs, dancing, chanting, drumming, etc.)

**Intro-PS:** In light of the recent bee crisis: as we raise energy in this circle let us take the time to direct a good portion of that energy to our Natural World and the creatures who we depend on to survive.

"If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would only have four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man." - Albert Einstein

### **Releasing/Thanking Goddess**

**Intro-PS:** "We end ritual by thanking the Goddess, releasing the quarters, and opening the circle in order

to recognize the shift in consciousness and facilitate grounding”

**PS:** “We thank you, Great Goddess,  
for sharing in our celebration.  
You are the Source of All Things  
And you are always with us,  
within and without; above and below.  
In love we bid you hail and farewell.”

RESPONSE: HAIL AND FAIRWELL

**RELEASING CENTER**

Spirits of the Center,  
We thank you for your guidance.  
In love we bid you hail and farewell.

RESPONSE: HAIL AND FAIRWELL

**RELEASING NORTH**

Spirits of the North,  
We thank you for strengthening this ritual.  
In love we bid you hail and farewell.

RESPONSE: HAIL AND FAIRWELL

**RELEASING WEST**

Spirits of the West,  
We thank you for cleansing this circle.  
In love we bid you hail and farewell.

RESPONSE: HAIL AND FAIRWELL

**RELEASING SOUTH**

Spirits of the South,  
We thank you for shedding light on our workings.  
In love we bid you hail and farewell.

RESPONSE: HAIL AND FAIRWELL

**RELEASING EAST**

Spirits of the East,  
We thank you for lending your insight to our spirits.  
In love we bid you hail and farewell.

RESPONSE: HAIL AND FAIRWELL

**OPENING THE CIRCLE - Hand Over Hand Method:**  
Counter-clockwise "IN LOVE THE CIRCLE IS OPENED"

**PS:** "The circle is open but ever unbroken.  
So mote it be."

RESPONSE: SO MOTE IT BE





## Works Cited

Baring, Anne and Jules Cashford. *The Myth of the Goddess: Evolution of an Image*. London: Penguin Books, 1991.

"completion." Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2007.  
<http://www.merriam-webster.com> (2 March. 2007).

"reincarnation." Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2007.  
<http://www.merriam-webster.com> (2 March. 2007).

"karma." Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2007.  
<http://www.merriam-webster.com> (2 March. 2007).



## Selected Bibliography

Eisler, Riane, *The Chalice and the Blade*

Sjoo, Monica, *The Great Cosmic Mother*

Neumann, Eric, *The Great Mother*

Stone, Merlin, *When God was a Woman*

Wilshire, Donna, *Virgin, Mother, Crone*

Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*

Monaghan, Patricia, *Goddess Path*

Markale, Jean, *The Great Goddess*

McLean, Adam, *The Triple Goddess*

Gadon, Elinor, *Once and Future Goddess*

Graves, Robert, *The White Goddess*

NicMhacha, Sharynne MacLeod, *Queen of the Night*

Gimbutas, Marija, *The Language of the Goddess*



## Contributors and Thanks

Much thanks to Circle of the Green for their brilliant input and support in the completion of this book. You have all had a hand in this work and I am eternally grateful for all of you.

Thanks to my friend Joie Kolstad who sat with me and talked out altars and practices - among other things. Your ability to help me organize thoughts and your wonderful ideas are more appreciated than you realize.

Thanks to Wendy Dettmer for her tireless proofreading and her lovely contribution "Understanding Happiness". You are a Goddess-send my friend.

A million thanks to my best friend, soul-sister, and co-founder of Circle of the Green and Tridea, Kelly Schnupp. Without you none of this would exist. I'm not even sure I would exist.

To my family - my husband, daughter, and mother - thank you for your support and for putting up with me on the computer all the time to get this done.

I love you all so much.

















