

Booklet: The Noble Order of Tara Manual
by Olivia Robertson

This ritual is to be used to consecrate a new Knight/Dame within the Noble Order of Tara.

**CONSECRATION OF A DAME/KNIGHT
OF THE NOBLE ORDER OF TARA:
THE ORDEAL OF THE DANAAN TREASURES**

If out-of-doors the rite should be performed by well or stream and let there be a bonfire and Dolmen Altar. If within, let there be a Dolmen altar and on it eight burning candles, burning incense and a mighty cauldron of water. A sword lies on the capstone. Lying nearby are the robes and insignia and sword of a Knight/Dame. The GRAND DAME/KNIGHT COMMANDER, the DAMES, KNIGHTS, LORDS & LADIES OF THE GRAEL, the DAME/KNIGHT COMMANDERS and COMPANIONS are vested with insignia and robes of the Noble Order of Tara. The CANDIDATE is in White and with the SPONSOR stands outside Temple gateway or door. TWO GUARDIANS stand outside door, their halberds crossed to bar the way. SPONSOR strikes three times on door.

GUARDIAN: Who seeks admittance to the Hall of the Noble Order of Tara?

1st KNIGHT: A Companion who seeks investiture as a Knight/Dame.

1st DAME: Who is his/her sponsor?

SPONSOR: I am sponsor of this loyal Companion of our Order.

2nd KNIGHT: Is he/she well prepared to face the Ordeal of the four treasures?

SPONSOR: Under my direction our Companion has made good progress.

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: (*to COMPANIONS*) Is it the will of the Companions that the candidate be admitted to undertake Initiation?

COMPANIONS signify consent by raising right hands.

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: So mote it be. Let the Candidate be admitted.

(The SPONSOR leads CANDIDATE into hall.)

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: (*raises staff at altar*) I invoke the Sun God Lugh of the Long White Arm, Who through ordeal won the Sword of Light which is the Light of Love and Truth.

GRAND DAME COMMANDER: (*raises wand*) I invoke the Goddess Tara. Beautiful Tara, in whose waving hair many-coloured flowers gleam, Whose robe is the ocean, Whose seat is the rock of destiny, Goddess of this earth, bless our ceremony. All nature is Your robe of green and gold. Our intent is the protection and preservation of Nature. Pro Dea et Natura is our will. As an bhean 0 Tara.

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: Companions, let us proceed with the Investiture of our Companion, (*NAME*) as a Knight/Dame of our Order.

2nd KNIGHT: (*to CAN.*) Are you dedicated to the Grand Design of the Order to work with the Goddess to protect and preserve our earth and all its creatures?

CAN: I am.

DAME COMMANDER: Know that first you must undergo the Ordeals of the four Treasures of the Tuathe De Danann. These are the four sacred Elements of Earth. Have you the will and the courage to face Initiation?

CAN: With the blessing of the Goddess of the Earth I have.

1st KNIGHT: Learn then of the Four Treasures of the Tuathe De Danann. The Gods and Goddesses of Eire, Whose Mother is Dana, came on clouds out of the Heavens from Four Cities in the Sky. These were named Falias, Gorias, Finias, and Murias. This ancient knowledge has been preserved by the Megalithic order which we Bards gave only through the spoken word. But in later times Christian monks committed some of the words in scripts written in Latin, Labor Gabala Eireann. But to them the Deities were Kings and Queens who later bore the names of the Danaans. They reported that the Danaans brought the Lia Fail, stone of Destiny, from Falias. On such a stone the Kings and Queens of England were crowned, for without that stone they had no authority of rulership. Every hearth and Order has such a stone. In Egypt this is the Throne of Isis. The ruler draws power from the Earth Mother. In Eire the stone of Destiny is presided over by the Goddess Tara or Te-a. Behold our own Lia Fail the capstone of our altar!

2nd KNIGHT: The Sword of Light the Danaans brought from Gorias. This is the Fire Power and though the Knight/Dame wields it, yet the inner fires that glow like the golden apples of Tir na nOg are bestowed by the Maiden. This is the serpent of power of the Goddess Morrigan that rises in the spine of the true Knight and Dame.

1st KNIGHT: From Murias in the sky the Danaans brought the Cauldron of Plenty which in verity is fertility itself that comes from our earth's atmosphere, bringing life-giving rain and crops. It is also the Holy Grael of the Mysteries, the reception of mystical consciousness. In our Chapter it is represented by this well/cauldron of water.

2nd KNIGHT: The Spear of Destiny the Danaans brought from the starry Finias. First it was wielded by Lugh and then by Nuadh of the silver arm, but now it is with the Father God the Dagda and not for humans. It is represented by all meteors; and here we show it forth through the fire of this bonfire/these candles and by the smoke of incense that reaches on high, yet brings its warmth, light and fragrance to all.

GRAND DAME COMMANDER: You have learnt of the treasures. For what purpose would you seek them?

CAN: With the Goddess's blessing, I would achieve them, that I might attain their qualities. I seek serenity and strength: will and conscience.

2nd KNIGHT: Has the candidate been prepared by solemn vigil?

1st KNIGHT: S/he has. All night s/he meditated in the Holy of Holies. S/he has been granted a vision of the Goddess and received Her Vocation.

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: I judge the Candidate to be prepared.

2nd KNIGHT: *(to CAN.)* What name do you choose in the Order?

CAN: *(gives name)*

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: Let the Ordeal by Water begin!

THE CAULDRON OF PLENTY

LADIES OF THE GRAEL:

LADY TARA: *(takes sword from altar and unsheathes it)* From the depths of earth comes the Light!

(She hands sword to LADY BRIGHID.)

LADY BRIGHID: From the primaeval waters cometh Life!

(She plunges sword into well/cauldron and stirs it three times in the water. She then holds it aloft and brandishes it three times)

Behold Excalibur, drawn from the waters of the Lady of the Lake!

(to CAN.) To reach Excalibur, you need to cross water in one leap!

CANDIDATE attempts to leap across well/cauldron with neither feet touching ground. He may try three times. When he receives the sword from Brighid she presents him/her with the scabbard.

BRIGHID: Which do you choose, the sword or the scabbard?

CAN: The sword of victory is drawn from the scabbard which is the womb of the Goddess. Upon it are rubies and magical gems and these give virtue to the blade. I choose the scabbard that I may have Wisdom to act and to be still.

BRIGHID: You have made wise choice. For the unhappy Knight/Dame who cannot sheathe the Sword lives in perpetual warfare and so the fruits of victory are destroyed. Sheathe the sword in peace!

CAN. sheathes the sword.

BRIGHID: Will you protect the homes of humans and beasts and birds and all creatures; land, rivers, seas, forests?

CAN: With the grace of Brighid I shall.

COMPANIONS: So mote it be!

BRIGHID: You have passed the test of water.

(For woman Candidate) You are Dindrane, sister of Sir Percival, the first visionary to see the Holy Grael.

(For man Candidate) You are Galahad the Knight of the Sidhe, who achieved the Grael.

She gives him/her spring water to drink. She places unsheathed sword between capstone and supporting stone.

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: May the Ordeal of Earth be Undertaken!

THE STONE OF DESTINY

TARA: To achieve the Stone of Rulership you need both Will and Strength! You have the scabbard. You need the sword. To free the sword you need to lift the Chapter Stone in both your hands.

CANDIDATE lifts the capstone of the dolmen in both hands. With skill s/he extracts the sword with right hand while balancing stone with her/his left. He presents it to TARA.

TARA: *(holding it aloft)* Behold Talamh, Sword of Queen Grainne Mhaile, Warrior Queen of Connaught!

(She presents it to CAN.)

GRAND DAME COMMANDER: *(to CAN.)* Have you the courage to face opposition, and the endurance to withstand all oppression as you strive to protect our earth?

CAN: With the blessing of Tara I shall endure to the end.

TARA: *(presents sword to CAN. S/he returns it to altar. She gives him/her a local stone having blessed it.)*

Hold this in your hand when you need patience and endurance.

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: It is now needful that the Candidate face the Ordeal of Fire!

THE SWORD OF LIGHT

THE LADY MORRIGAN: *(takes the sword and makes the sign of the Druids, three bars of light)* Let the Candidate leap over the fire!

The Candidate leaps over the bonfire, or if indoors, over the incense in its tripod stand. S/he must not be singed or upset any ash. S/he may try three times.

GRAND DAME COMMANDER: *(to CAN)* Do you venerate the Goddess Dana and all the Gods and Goddesses of all faiths manifest upon our earth in their Truth and Love?

CAN: I honour the Divine Life in all beings, and so honour all Deities through Whom life is born.

MORRIGAN: Then receive Geburah, Sword of the Archangel Michael!

(She presents sword and he restores it to altar. She places her hands upon his head.)

Feel the fire of the Morrigan pass through your body, that you may shine like the Sun!

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: Let the final test of the Element of Air be undergone.

THE SPEAR OF DESTINY

LADY DANA: *(lifts sword point in air)* Strength is not enough. Skill is needed to understand the invisible Spear of Destiny! Draw this sword through each candle flame without putting a single one out!

Candidate attempts to draw sword through each flame without putting any out. S/he may try three times.

GRAND DAME COMMANDER: Have you an open mind and heart so that you may recognise the Divine Spirit when it blows upon you and accept it with honesty?

CAN: With Dana's wisdom, may I learn to do so.

DANA: *(anoints her/his head, heart and hands with holy oil)* Receive this holy oil whose fragrance extends through your whole being. So may your mind, heart and hands be in harmony.

COMPANIONS: So mote it be!

DANA: *(presents sword to CAN.)* Accept this sword Gliadan of the God Lugh! You have nobly passed the four ordeals of the Sacred Treasures of the Danaans.

GRAND DAME COMMANDER: I declare that *(NAME)* is accepted as Knight/Dame of our noble Order of Chivalry. Let the Grand Knight Commander bestow the Accolade.

(She presents unsheathed sword to GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER, having anointed it with holy oil.)

THE ACCOLADE

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: *(to Can)* What is the name of your own sword?

(CAN. gives name. GRAND DAME COMMANDER: anoints the sword with oil.)

May this holy oil consecrate this sword that its spiritual power be used with love and honour, courage and compassion.

(CAN. places her/his own sword to one side.)

2nd KNIGHT: Let the candidate kneel before the altar. *(CAN. does so.)*

GRAND DAME COMMANDER: *(raises wand before altar)* Holy Goddess, Whose attributes are Love, Beauty and Truth, Who cometh to us as the Goddess Tara through our Order of

Chivalry dedicated to saving the earth, protect and strengthen this Candidate, give him/her the ardour that starts great enterprises and the endurance that bringeth them to a glorious conclusion!

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: (*holds sword before altar*) Behold, the Sword of light! May the Light be with it and through it and about it in Tara's Name!

(*GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: faces CAN. and bestows the accolade, right shoulder, left, right again touched with flat of sword.*)

Arise, Sir/Dame (*NAME.*)

(*CANDIDATE rises*)

THE INVESTITURE

LADY BRIGHID: (*places sash of the order with insignia round the left shoulder of the CAN, knot on right hip.*) I bestow this sash and garter, Cestus of Brighid. May love be in your heart, over which is this insignia!

(*She ties garter below left knee. She kisses CAN. on both cheeks*)

LADY TARA: (*places cloak about the CAN. Insignia on left.*) Accept this Cloak of Tara, which holds the dreams of the world. May your dreams always be greater than the accomplishment thereof!

LADY MORRIGAN: (Crowns CAN. with chapeau of Order.) I crown you with this chapeau in sign that you can control the passions within yourself, and so control others!

LADY DANA: (*presents amethyst ring on first finger of right hand.*) I grant you this ring in token of your union to the Goddess.

2nd KNIGHT: (*presents CAN. with his /her own sword*) We present you with your own consecrated sword. . .(Sword's name.) May the Light of Lugh be with you evermore.

COMPANIONS: So mote it be.

GRAND KNIGHT COMMANDER: In the name of, Tara I declare that Sir/Dame (*Name*) has been invested as a Knight/Dame of the Noble Order of Tara.

FANFARE. All kiss CANDIDATE on both cheeks.

(*Meditation for guidance on plans for Conservation, local and on a wider scale. Reports. Healing rays are sent forth for peace and justice for all beings.*)

End of Rite.

Sources: "Lebor Gabala Erenn," trans. Macalister, Irish Texts Society. "General History of Ireland," Keating, trans. O'Connor, Duffy. "La Morte d'Arthur," Sir Thomas Mallory, Everyman.

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