

Ordination of Priestesses and Priests

By: Olivia Robertson

Rite of Ordination

Those taking part:

Guardian of the Gate

The Scribe

Temple Maidens

Priest of the Goddess

Priestess of the Goddess

Candidate

On the altar let there be placed a cup of spring water, a stone, a vessel of grain, a pot of burning incense, and a phial of oil. By the altar let there be placed a crown, a stole and a wand. Let the temple of the Goddess be filled with flowers, plants and lighted candles. If out-of-doors, the altar may be a dolmen and lanterns may be used.

The participants wear their appropriate robes. The Scribe holds a scroll containing a record of the qualifications and works of the Candidate. The Temple Maidens carry their offerings. The Guardian of the Gate admits those invited to attend the Rite. Music is played. The priestly procession approaches the temple. The Guardian of the Gate stands aside. The Scribe heads the procession, followed by the Temple Maidens. Now follow the visiting Priestesses and Priests, the Priest and Priestess of the Goddess. The Guardian now enters, standing by the entrance.

Priest: Honoured Priestesses and Priests, and all our guests, you are welcome to this Holy Temple of the Goddess. You are invited to join with us in the Ordination of a Priestess/Priest.

Scribe: The Candidate awaits without.

Priest: Worthy Guardian of the Gate guide her/him hither.

Processional music. The Guardian leaves the Temple. He returns with the Candidate. He conducts her/him through the assembly to the altar. The Temple Maidens stand behind her/him.

Priest: *(to the candidate)* Do you wish to be Ordained as Priestess/Priest of the Goddess?

Candidate: I do.

Priest: So be it. May the Hierophant make Invocation to Deity.

(Hierophant faces North and makes the sign of the planet Uranus with her wand.)

Priestess: I invoke the Goddess Isis and her son the God Horus. May Wisdom and Harmony prevail.

(Priestess faces East and makes the sign of the planet Venus with her wand.)

Priestess: I invoke the Goddess Kwan Yin and the Bodhisattva Maitreya. Let compassion and serenity be bestowed.

(Priestess faces North-East. She makes the sign of Neptune with her wand.)

Priestess: I invoke the Goddess Dana and the God Manannan mac Lir. May Joy and Beauty be granted.

Priest: Hear the words of a Bard of Eire, James Stephens. He tells of the happy march of the immortal Sidhe, to bring joy to the race of humans. Angus Og, the Irish God of Love, leads the way with his Bride, Caitilin ni Houlihan, she who is the land of Eire:

"We will go down to the world of men and women,' said Angus Og to Caitilin his Bride: 'from our quiet dwelling among the hills to the noisy city and the multitude of people. This will be our first journey, but at a time not distant we will go to them again, and we will not return from that journey, for we will live among our people and be at peace.'

"May the day come soon,' said she. And so the Gods and Goddesses left their hollow hills and came from the mountains to the City of the Hurdles. And One came also to whom the hosts shouted with mighty love, even the Serene One, Dana, Mother of the Gods, steadfast for ever."

Priestess: Thus spake the Goddess Dana: "My breath is on the morning, my smile is summer, from my hand the birds of the air take their food. The mild ox is my friend, and the wolf trots by my friendly side: at my voice the daisy peeps from her cave and the nettle couches his lance. The rose arrays herself in innocence, scattering abroad her sweetness with the dew, and the oak tree laughs to me in the air. The lambs follow my footsteps, they crop my bounty in the meadows and are not thwarted: the weary cling to my bosom everlasting. Through me proceed all actions and all deeds, through me voices come to teach and aid, from me cometh the Divine Promise and the Breath from afar laden with promise."

Priest: Let us seek communion with the Goddesses, whose attributes are Wisdom, Compassion and Beauty. So may we find our own true parts in the Divine Drama.

Priest: *(to Scribe)* Honoured Scribe, what work has this Candidate to offer, that she/he may best serve Deity?

(The Scribe reads from his scroll the qualification and works of the Candidate, with reference to the virtues of Wisdom, Compassion and Beauty.)

Scribe: In token of her/his dedication to the Divine Service, the Candidate offers incense to Isis, flowers to Kwan Yin, and a work of art to Dana.

(The Candidate receives her/his offering from the Temple Maidens and places these gifts upon the altar.)

Priestess: It is good to give. It is also necessary to receive.

(Priestess takes the stone from the altar and presents it to the Candidate.)

Priestess: *(to the Candidate)* Take this stone from Isis. May you discern the spark of life within all existence.

(Priestess takes the vessel of grain from the altar and presents it to the Candidate.)

Priestess: Receive these grains of corn from Kwan Yin. May you protect all growing things.

(The Priestess lifts the cup of water from the altar and dips her finger into it, and touches the candidate on the brow.)

Priestess: Accept this water from Dana. May you receive True Vision.

Priest: The purpose of Deity unfolds itself through us in many ways. Manifold are the virtues of the Goddesses.

Priest: *(to Candidate)* Which Goddess do you choose to follow as Priestess/Priest that you may aid Her in Her work?

(The Candidate declares the name of the Goddess whose path she/he would follow.)

Priest: So may it be. May the Hierophant ordain you before us all.

(Candidate hands her/his stone and vessel of grains to the Temple Maidens, Hierophant takes the phial of oil from the altar, She anoints head, heart and hands of the Candidate.)

Priestess: In the name of the Goddess *(Hierophant names the chosen Goddess.)* I ordain thee Priestess/Priest.

(Hierophant takes up the crown and places it upon the new Priestess/Priest's head.)

Priestess: With this crown I dignify thy head.

(Priestess takes the stole and places it about the Priestess/Priest allowing one part to cover her/his heart.)

Priestess: With this stole I hallow thy heart.

(Priestess takes the wand and hands it to the Priestess.)

Priestess: With this wand I strengthen thy will for good. May you be blessed by the Goddess *(Hierophant names the Goddess chosen.)*

Receive now the blessings of the Goddesses *(Hierophant names the other two Goddesses.)*

Daughter/Son of the Goddess *(Hierophant names the Goddess chosen.)* Reflect thy Mother's Glory!

Priest: *(holding hands of Candidate within his own)* In the name of the Priesthood of the Great Goddess of the Pantheon, I accept the ordination of this Priestess/Priest!

(Priestesses and Priests present also express acceptance of the Ordination, holding Candidate's hands. One among them may here give an Address.)

In place of an Address, these readings may be given:

Scribe: Hear ye the words of Julian, Pontifex Maximus, Emperor of Rome. He writes to the Priestess Theodora.

Scribe: *(reads)* "I have received from you who are wisdom itself your letter telling me of the fair and blessed promises and gifts of the Deities to us. I now say plainly that ... all who aspire to priestly office must ... engage with greater energy in the Temple worship of the Deities."

Scribe: *(reads)* Also the supreme Pontiff writes thus to a Priest of the Olympian Religion:

"I shall describe what manner of man a priest should be, that he may be justly honoured. He should teach reverence towards the Deities. It is fitting that we should perform our services to the Deities as though They were Themselves present with us; and though not seen by us we may direct Their gaze, which is more powerful than any light, even penetrating our hidden thoughts. It is our duty to venerate the

images of the Deities, Their temples and holy precincts and altars. It is our duty to maintain all the rituals of the temples. You must above all exercise Philanthropy for from it result many other blessings, and that choicest blessing of all, the good will of the Deities. Philanthropy is of many kinds: you see how varied are the gifts of Athena the craftswoman!"

Priest of Dana: Hear the words of Aon, Bard of Ireland as he tells of the Earth Goddess, by whose favour we dwell upon this earth.

First Temple Maiden:

"She is rapt in dreams divine.
As her clouds of beauty pass
On our glowing hearts they shine,
Mirrored there as in a glass."

Second Temple Maiden:

"Earth whose dreams are we and they
With her deep heart's gladness fills
All our human lips can say
Or the dawn-fired singer trills."

Priest: Harken to the words of Aon, as he tells of a true daughter of the Goddess, described by her friend.

"Aoife passed like a gay transfiguring fire through life. She could with a word, a laugh, crumble whole lofty Himalayas of pretence, breaking up the moulds of mind in which so many imprison themselves. But she did not drive the soul naked out of the house of its self-imaginings but gave to each a star by which they might be guided. She spoke to others as if they were immortals, as if she saw seraph kings glowing through the earthly body. She told me I was to recognise the immortal in people.

"Once I slept in the same room and had a dream which was, I think, more than a dream. There rose out of her sleeping body a glorious creature like the sun for brightness. I said calmly, as one who knew, to another who was with me in my dream. 'She is one of the Dawn Maidens', and after that her body to me was only a lovely disguise. She was a divine comrade who overlooked none and who heaped precious things on others."

Scribe: A vision was given to Aon, Bard of Eire of a son of Dana:

"In this meditation I was brought to a wooded valley beyond which was a mountain, Ben Bulben in the West, and between heaven and earth over the valley was a vast figure aureoled with light, and it descended from that circle of light and assumed human shape and stood before me and looked at me. This being vanished, and was instantly replaced by another vision of a woman with a blue cloak around her shoulders, who came into a room and lifted a young child upon her lap, and from all Ireland rays of light converged upon that child. I saw the whole of Ireland lit up from mountain to sea, spreading its rays to the heavens."

Priestess: May the new Priestess/Priest give us the Blessing.

New Priestess/Priest: (*faces outwards, palms outstretched*) In the name of the Goddess whose attributes are Love, Beauty and Truth, may all beings be blessed: the Sidhe and humans, animals, birds, reptiles, fishes, insects, trees, plants, this earth and all the elements.

OMNES. So mote it be.

(*All send healing.*)

Priestess: (*turning North*) We give thanks to Isis and Horus.
(*turning East*) We give thanks to Kwan Yin and Maitreya.
(*turning North-East*) We give thanks to Dana and Manannan.

New Priestess/Priest: May we go forth with the Divine Blessing.

End of Rite.

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