

OSTARA (VERNAL OR SPRING EQUINOX)

(Equinox exact at 1:09PM AEST 23/09/10)

Libra/Aries Full Moon 23/09/10

(Full Moon 7:17PM AEST, 00 degrees, 15 minutes Aries)

Ritual written and led by Jenny (Jenwytch)*



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BACKGROUND

Ostara is a time to celebrate the arrival of Spring, the renewal and rebirth of Nature herself, and the coming lushness of Summer. Ostara is a sabbat of light, of child-like fun and humour, of celebrating and growing. It is at this time when light and darkness are in balance, yet the light is growing stronger by the day. The forces of masculine and feminine energy are also in balance at this time.

At Ostara we think of renewing ourselves. We renew our thoughts, our dreams, and our aspirations. We think of renewing our relationships. This is an excellent time of year to start a new path or begin anything new, or to completely revitalize something. This is also an excellent time for prosperity rituals or rituals that have anything to do with growth.

The Spring Equinox occurred yesterday at 1:09pm, precisely when the Sun entered Libra. Libra is the midpoint of the Zodiac; it is the scale of balance, just as the Equinox is also the balance or the midpoint between light and dark.

The Full Moon was last night at 7:17pm, in Aries. The Moon in Aries signifies a time for cleansing and personal development, starting new things and new beginnings. We're motivated by a strong desire to start fresh. A gut instinct to start something new is with us now, as well as the gumption to do so. Our pioneering impulses are strong, and we feel energetic, spontaneous, and enthusiastic.

Spring Maiden - Ostara or Eostre [pronounced ESS-trah or Y'OSE-tree] is an Anglo-Saxon Goddess; the one for whom the Ostara Sabbat is named. When the Saxons invaded Britain, they brought this vigorous Goddess with them and she was eventually adopted into the Celtic pantheon. She is seen as spring personified, a Goddess of rebirth, new beginnings, and fertility. She comes into your life with her springtime message of personal growth. It is time to open to things in your life that facilitate growth, development, evolution.

The modern belief that eggs are delivered by a rabbit, possibly comes from a popular (but probably recent) 'legend' about Eostre...

According to the story, the goddess Eostre found a wounded bird in the snow. To help the little bird survive the winter, she transformed it into a rabbit, but the transformation was incomplete and the rabbit retained the ability to lay eggs. In thanks for its life being saved, the rabbit took the eggs and decorated them and left them as gifts for Eostre. She was so pleased by the rabbit's gift that she wished all humankind to share in her joy.

Green Man - The Green Man is the personification of the spirit of nature itself in its vegetation form; the living heartbeat in every cell of a plant, shrub or tree, and the divine essence of the seasons. He is the divine essence in the world of trees and flowers. He is health through the plants and fruits we eat. And he is the ongoing cycle of the year, the infinite wheel of life. The Green Man emphasizes the fertility, regeneration and different life/seasonal phases as shown by the world of vegetation. He also represents the great solar god; the one that rises in spring, blooms in summer, declines in autumn and dies in wintertime, to be reborn the next spring again. He is the great fertilizing force of the land: he is the great masculine life-essence, the God, the Father, the Shepherd, the Lord of Light and the Lord of Darkness, and the other side of the receptive Goddess-energy of nature.

THE RITUAL

CIRCLE CASTING

"By the power of the Dragons, may this circle be blessed, cleansed and sanctified."
(To be repeated while walking/casting the circle. The circle is walked/cast three times in a sunwise (anticlockwise) direction.)

QUARTER CALLS

East

Spirits of the East, Spirits of Air,
awaken us with the Spring breeze.
Fill our lungs, and join us
in celebration of the renewal of light and life.

Hail and welcome!

North

Spirits of the North, Spirits of Fire,
warm us with the rising sun.
Quicken our hearts, and join us
in celebration of the unfolding of the Earth.

Hail and welcome!

West

Spirits of the West, Spirits of Water,
wash us in gentle rain.
Revive our longing, and join us
in celebration of boundless possibility.

Hail and welcome!

South

Spirits of the South, Spirits of Earth,
clothe us in the finery of new growth.

WORKING

Starting in the East, The Spring Maiden carries a basket of egg candles sunwise around the circle and each person takes an egg. These eggs are to be held during the meditation. After the meditation everyone will write on their egg candles, then light them at home later to release the energies out into the universe to come back as manifest reality, letting the vitality of Spring renewal continue to be with each person as they go about their daily life.

Support our steps, and join us
in celebration of a world made green again.

Hail and welcome!

INVOCATIONS

Spring Maiden

I call upon the Spring Maiden
Lady Eostre, come to us
Goddess of Earth, mother of all
With love we greet you
As night and day once again
Greet each other in passing.
Be with us, complete our circle,
And help us always to see your face
In all that lives.

Hail and Welcome!

Green Man

I call upon the Greenman,
Lord of the Forests, come to us
God of the growing light
With love we greet you
As night and day once again
Greet each other in passing.
Be with us, complete our circle
And help us always to see your face
In all that lives.

Hail and Welcome!



MEDITATION

Sit in a comfortable position, with your feet firmly on the ground and hands resting in your lap. Close your eyes. Relax and center yourself by taking deep slow breaths.

Now journey inward.

Imagine that you are in a hilly countryside. It is just before dawn at the beginning of Springtime. The land is nearing the end of its Wintertime slumber.

You face the East and watch the Sun as it begins to rise. Rays of light shimmer onto the land and into the sky, creating the beautiful colors of the Dawn.

Now, as the glowing disc of the Sun becomes visible above the hills, you see the Goddess Ostara appear on the land in the distance in the East. She is beginning to move toward you. As She moves, the land awakens with new life.

You see Her coming toward you in the form of a Beautiful Maiden. You see Her radiant face and flowing gown. She is carrying a golden basket filled with colored eggs. Beside Her is Her

companion, a frisky magical Rabbit. As They come closer to you, you see that with each step that They take, the land around them bursts into new life and grows green. New grasses sprout from the ground. Herbs flourish. Trees grow new leaves.

You call out a welcome to Them and to the Spring they bring. As you meet face to face, you see that the Goddess Ostara and the Rabbit are both smiling a welcome to you. Ostara then holds Her golden basket toward you and invites you to choose one of the eggs in it as a gift of Spring. You notice that each egg has a different color. You see the beautiful array of choices. You feel more drawn to one of the eggs than the others and choose it. Now you hold the egg that you have selected in both of your hands.

You first focus on its color and reflect on what that color means to you.

Then Ostara invites you to ask this Sacred Egg to give you a message about personal growth. You ask this and then are quiet as you pay attention to whatever words, symbols, sensations, impressions, or other forms of message emerge.....

Ostara now invites you to take this Sacred Egg and its power of new growth into yourself. You hold it to your heart and as you do this, you absorb it into your being. You experience the renewal of Springtime. You radiate vitality. Be immersed in this experience.

Continuing to experience vitality within you, you prepare to end this meditative journey. You reflect once more on the color and message of the Sacred Egg.

You bid Ostara and Her Rabbit companion farewell for now, knowing that they continue to live within your consciousness to guide you in your Springtime growth.

When you feel ready, take several deep, slow breaths to aid you in returning to waking consciousness.

Then slowly stretch, open your eyes and orient to the here and now, as you carry with you the memory of your experiences on the journey you have just completed.



Leader:

Take a few moments now and inscribe on your egg candle any symbols or words, that represent your experiences or guidance you received for personal growth. Then write your name on the bag and put the egg inside.....

When everyone has finished writing on their egg candles, hold up the candles in the bags...

All say:

"This candle is in honor of Ostara, the Spring Equinox! I honor the changing of the seasons, and the reawakening of the earth. With spring comes lighter days, sprouting seeds and new beginnings. With the spring comes my vow to work towards these new beginnings in my own life. So mote it be!"

Now place the candles in bags on the altar (making sure they have all been clearly labelled first).

The Leader says:

Now we will dance and chant
As we raise and send forth
The Power of the natural world,
To grant our wishes for the new season.
So Mote it Be.

All:

So mote it be.

Everybody dances, skips or walks quickly around the circle, going sun-wise, while repeating the following chant until the power is raised.

Around, around the circle go
Seeds of changes we do sow
Let them flow, let them grow
As above, so below!
When the Power has risen, the Leader will call, "STOP"

Leader:

Now send all the power we've raised into these eggs.....
After the count of 3 we will all clap our hands once together to end the spell.
1-2-3 Clap!

Ostara Altar



These candles are to be taken home and burned to release the energies of your intent out into the universe to come back as manifest reality, letting the vitality of Spring renewal continue to be with you as you go about your daily life.

CLOSING

Spring Maiden

Goddess of Earth, mother of all
For the Spring
For your love
For your power
For the fertility of the world we share
For your presence within our circle
We thank you, and ask your blessing,
Until we gather here again.

Hail and farewell.

Green Man

God of the growing light
For the Spring
For your warmth
For your power
For the lengthening day
For the energy that surrounds us
For your presence within our circle
We thank you, and ask your blessing,
Until we gather here again.

Hail and farewell.

South

Spirits of the South,
We thank you for your presence here
and ask for your blessing as you depart
May there be peace between us now and
forever.

Hail and farewell.

West

Spirits of the West,
We thank you for your presence here
and ask for your blessing as you depart
May there be peace between us now and
forever.

Hail and farewell.

North

Spirits of the North,
We thank you for your presence here
and ask for your blessing as you depart
May there be peace between us now and
forever.

Hail and farewell.

East

Spirits of the East,
We thank you for your presence here
and ask for your blessing as you depart
May there be peace between us now and
forever.

Hail and farewell.

*All walk the circle in an anti-sunwise direction,
singing...*

May this circle be open but unbroken
May the peace of the Goddess be ever in our
hearts.

Merry Meet and Merry Part
And Merry Meet again.

*Everyone may now collect their egg candles
from the altar.*

Lighting Your Ostara Egg Candle at Home



Sit for a few moments and centre yourself. Think of the coming spring and the new beginnings you'd like to start in your own life. Also think back to your meditation and the messages you received. When you are ready, light the candle and say these words (or words you've written yourself):

"I light this candle in honor of Ostara, the Spring Equinox! I honor the changing of the seasons, and the reawakening of the earth. With spring comes lighter days, sprouting seeds and new beginnings. With the spring comes my vow to work towards these new beginnings in my own life (state what new beginnings you'll work toward this season). So mote it be!"

Let the candle burn as long as you can (never leave it unattended). Relight it when you are doing something to move forward on your new beginning goals, or when you need a bit of inspiration in moving forward.

** This ritual is a combination of the author's original ideas and information obtained from various books and/or internet sources.*

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