



Celtic Prayer Circle Celebration of Bealtaine May 1, 2022

This season in the Celtic calendar marks the movement from the dark half to the light half of the year, from the inner to the active. The name is said to derive from Old Irish, meaning "bright fire." It is the season of the rising sun and warming air, the greening, unfurling and blossoming of flora.

The purpose of Bealtaine was to encourage crop growth, fertility and to protect the most treasured possession, the cattle. The main ritual was the procession of cattle and people between two bonfires, which were believed to protect and have purifying qualities.

Water drawn from local holy wells at this time was considered especially potent and flowers left at holy wells on May Day were also believed to be restorative. The dew that occurred on the morning of May Day was thought to offer a cure for the rest of the year and washing the face with or walking in the first dew of May Day was believed to have curative properties.

Our prayer calls us to hold all people, all creatures and Earth in prayer. You are invited to listen for what needs to be released or uprooted so that new life may bloom in you and in our world so in need of healing, protection and light.

Light a candle, place something green or flowering and a vessel of water to create your prayer space.

Sunrise at Bealtaine by John McSherry: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljcg-ra-QHDY>

Reading: Isaiah 55: 10-11

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

For reflection....

What seeds are being watered and brought to life within you?

What needs to be birthed in our world in this season of greater warmth and light?

Closing

We join our prayer to those of the people of Ukraine, who seek peace and protection during this time of war. And we ask your mercy, that it may change the hearts and minds of those who wage war.

Great earth mother!
We give you praise today
and ask for your blessing upon us.
As seeds spring forth
and grass grows green
and winds blow gently
and the rivers flow
and the sun shines down
upon our land,
we offer thanks to you for your blessings
and your gifts of life each spring.



We invite you to join us as we celebrate and journey through all eight Celtic seasons acknowledging their individual qualities and energies, gifts, symbols and significance. See more on our Mercy by the Sea website <https://www.mercybythesea.org/programs-and-retreats/celtic-prayer-circle/>