



Celtic Prayer Circle Reflection for Samhain

Samhain marks the start of the Celtic New Year, the time of darkness and onset of winter, when earth lays bare. The veil between this world and the Otherworld is lifted, and the spirits of those who have gone before us become present. Samhain is a time to reflect and remember our ancestors and honor "all saints" and "all souls." We connect with, pray for and to, our ancestors, those who have journeyed with us.

This is the season of non-doing, entering an inner time of quiet and reflection, when both earth and humans rest. There is less outward activity so energy is gathered inwards to support what is happening deep within earth and deep in the human heart and spirit. The invitation is to surrender into darkness, active waiting and non-doing. This dark season is time for gathering energy to be used after winter has passed.

Prepare your prayer space with symbols of the season and a candle.

Place photos or mementoes of your familial ancestors, spiritual guides and saints.

Opening Song

Spirit of Our Elders by Kathy Sherman

- Link to a recording: <https://youtu.be/iiEpXLZHvOo>
- Lyrics: "Spirit of our Elders, dance oh dance in me."

Reading

Strength of the Ancestors from *Prayer Seeds* by Joyce Rupp

"In the spirit of indigenous people who believe in their unity with the ancestors, and who often call these spirits forth into the gatherings, let us call forth into our midst the presence, the memory, and the strength of those who influenced and shaped our beliefs and values.

Spirit of our ancestors, this day we join in acknowledging the blessedness of the many who inspired us and shaped our faith.

We turn in memory and appreciation toward those ancestors in our family of origin who influenced and encouraged us to live as our best selves.

We remember, too, those ancestors who left this world with hurts unresolved. We open our deep self to you and pray that any woundedness we've inherited will be healed through your grace and our love-filled hearts.

We bring to mind others beyond family who enriched our lives and led us further on our journey of personal transformation. We honor all those who sacrificed and suffered in order for peace and justice to be furthered on our planet.

We give thanks and rejoice for the countless, unnamed persons whose lives left a lasting mark of kindness and compassion. May the remembrance of each of these blessed ones inspire and increase our personal commitment to leave a trace of goodness wherever we go.

When we depart this sphere of life, may our inner strength have contributed to individual and world peace. We pause to pray for peace in our world at this time."

Reflection

- How will you make space to enter and embrace this time of holy darkness?
- How will you honor this time when the veil is thin, is there an ancestor you will remember during this month?
- Is there someone you might call upon for wisdom and guidance?

Closing Prayer

From *Beannacht* by John O'Donohue

May the nourishment of the earth be yours,
may the clarity of light be yours,
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.

And so may a slow
wind work these words
of love around you,
an invisible cloak
to mind your life.



➤ To view the entire Celtic calendar with its eight seasons – each with distinct qualities and energies, gifts, symbols and significance – visit our Celtic Prayer Circle page <https://www.mercybythesea.org/programs-and-retreats/celtic-prayer-circle/>.