

Koliada (Winter Solstice) - 2014

Dale Frampton, Mary Frampton, Jeremiah Kivi, Nick Watson

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1 Offerings

This section describes the offerings made to the various hallows, the Kindred and the attendees of the rite.

- Outdwellers: Ale
- Mati Syra Zemlya: Grain
- Fire: Cedar incense
- Well: silver
- Tree: water from the well
- The Zoryi: vodka
- Ancestors: Bread & Salt
- Nature Spirits: Bread
- Gods: Oil
- Dazhbog: vodka
- Final Sacrifice: Bilini
- Blessings: Bilini

2 Initiating the Rite (Nick)

{Speaker}:

Raised against the empty winter sky, the barren limbs of trees and our hands reach out in prayer.

We ask from the gods of winter the strength we will need to endure until spring and the wisdom we require to learn from the dark and the cold lessons they will teach.

May we receive them without flinching — (Book of Pagan Prayers, p.155)

{Speaker}: While passing out candles

This candle will be used later in the rite. It is yours to keep afterwards.

Insert meditation here

3 Outdwellers (Dale)

{Speaker}: Moves just outside the perimeter

O fierce whirlwind, O hostile powers, O wicked Bannik! You who reside in the bitter darkness, we make this offering to you. Go from here with the stormy winds and trouble not our holy work. During this sacred time, we now set aside all that separates us from the bliss and blessings of the Shining Ones.

{Speaker}: Leaves ale outside perimeter

4 Purification (Jeremiah)

{Speaker}: Anoint each participant with water from the well

May you be pure, fit to approach the Kindred.

5 Honoring the Earth Mother (Mary)

{Speaker}:

Our mother, Mati Syra Zemlya, who now sleeps through this winter, we do not forget you.

In the dark of winter, we honor you.

Even in the depths of your slumber, we honor you.

We remember the food you have provided, the wood we've harvested for our warmth and the water we drink.

Mother earth, accept our offering.

{Speaker}: Place bread and whisky/vodka on the ground or in the offering bowl

6 Statement of Purpose (Nick)

{Speaker}:

We praise Svarog; grandfather god, who is the origin of all Slavic kin, and creator of everything that lives; he is the eternal source that flows everywhere in summer, and in the winter never freezes. — The Book of Veles

We are here to celebrate the slavic festival Koliada, which precedes the winter solstice. The sun is approaching its death, and in this time of minimal light we reach out to our ancestors, and together we overcome the forces that pulls down

the sun, and restore it to the sky. Tonight we light fires, and remember the sun so that Dažbog shall once again rule the sky.

— Yule Blessing —

This is the long night.

This is the dark night.

This is the cold night.

This is the night of last hope.

This is the night of little spark.

This is the night of turning from darkness.

This is the night of turning toward light.

This is the night of wonder.

The long night is here:

Come to us, you spirits;

Together let us fill the long night with light,

Calling all beings to warm themselves at our fires.

- Ceisiwer Serith

7 Recreating the Cosmos (Jeremiah)

{Speaker}: Moves to the fire

To the flame, with this incense let you be purified and transcend the limits of this world. You are now The Sacred Fire; our connection to the heavens and the gods.

{Speaker}: offering is placed in the fire. Moves to the well

Cauldron of water, With this silver, let you be purified and transcend the limits of this world. You are now The Sacred Well; our connection to the underworld and our ancestors.

{Speaker}: Silver is placed in the well. Moves to the tree

Mighty tree, with this fire from The Sacred Fire, and water from The Sacred Well, you become The World Tree; that which connects and binds the three worlds together.

Like the tree is rooted in the land, so too do we stand firmly upon it.

Like the tree is encircled by the seas, so too are we encircled by them.

Like the tree dwells beneath the sky, so too do we live beneath it.

Once again we remember our place in the three realms, and await the coming forth of the kindred.

8 Opening the Gates (Dale)

{Speaker}: Addressing the Gatekeeper

I call to the Zoryi, the daughters of Dažbog, the sisters that watch the gate from which the sun leaves at dawn and enters at dusk.

Dobro požalovat Zorya Utrennaya, welcome morning star. We ask you who guards palace gate at dawn; you who opens it to allow the sun to traverse the sky, make this fire a gate.

Dobro požalovat Zorya Vechernyaya, welcome evening star. We ask you who guards the palace gate at dusk; you who closes it once the sun has left the sky, make this tree a gate.

Dobro požalovat Zorya Polunochnaya, welcome midnight star. We ask you who watches over the world in the dark of the night, make this well a gate.

{Speaker}: Places the offering into the fire

Zoryi, accept this offering. Let the gates be opened!

{All}:

Let the gates be opened!

9 Inviting the Kindred (Dale)

9.1 Inviting the Gods

{Speaker}:

Dobro požalovat Bogi i Bogini.

Welcome Gods and Goddesses.

We make space at our fire for the Gods and Goddesses of our people, and the gods of this land.

Bogi i Bogini, accept this offering of oil.

{Speaker}: Pours offering into the fire

You who nurture our spirits, you who challenge us to grow, you who we return to when we pass from this world.

{Speaker}: Call

We remember you.

{All}: Response

We honor you.

Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times

9.2 Inviting the Nature Spirits

Dobro požalovat Lesovík.

Welcome woodland spirits.

We make space at our fire for the spirits of this land, of its plants and trees, its birds and beasts and its waters.

Lesovík, accept this gift of bread, and lead us not astray as we walk through the world.

{Speaker}: Places offering next to the Tree

You who have dwelled in this world before man, who protect it, who nurture it.

{Speaker}: Call

We remember you.

{All}: Response

We honor you.

Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times

9.3 Inviting the Ancestors

{Speaker}:

Dobro požalovat predki.

Welcome Ancestors.

We make space at our fire for our mighty ancestors, for our honored ancestors, and for our beloved ancestors.

Predki, accept this offering of bread and salt.

{Speaker}: Places offering next to the Well

You who are of our blood and bone, you who are of our spirit and heart, you who have walked this world and left it before us.

{Speaker}: Call

We remember you.

{All}: Response

We honor you.

Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times

10 Key Offerings (Nick)

{Young girl}: walks around and lights everybody's candle

{Speaker}:

The Slavs considered the winter solstice a time to remember the ancestors, much like the Celts considered Samhain. At the Winter Solstice, as the sun approached its death, the living and dead could join together to overcome the forces that acted against the sun. Please take a moment to call out to, or just to remember your ancestors.

Attendees may make praise offerings to their ancestors at this time.

{Speaker}:

Dažbog, god of the sun, your ride across the sky has grown short, and we long to see more of you. Dažbog, ride your golden chariot across our sky and see our land below you, covered in snow. Journey longer and let your white horses breath their fire across the sky and bring warmth back to the land. We know there is a purpose in this season, but we miss your light and warmth, return to us.

{Speaker}:

As the candle burns, focus on the flame. *{Pause}* Let your thoughts reach back in time to a warm summer day. *{Pause}* From those thoughts, and with our ancestors around us, call out to the sun god to return.

{Speaker}:

Dažbog return!

{All}:

Dažbog return!

Repeat Call/Response for a total of 3 times

{Speaker}:

With our thoughts on you, Dažbog accept our offerings.

{Speaker}: Pours offering on the fire

{Speaker}:

You may now extinguish the flame on your candle. The candle is a link between you and the sun, light it when the darkness of winter seems oppressive and remember the warmth of summer and the fellowship of community.

{Speaker}:

Attendees may make praise offerings to other Kindred at this time.

11 Prayer of Sacrifice (Jeremiah)

{Speaker}:

With the sacred fire before us and the fires of the sun in our hearts, accept this final offering of bilini, to encourage your rebirth and return to our world.

Dažbog, accept our offering.

12 The Omen (Mary)

{Speaker}:

Do the Kindred accept our offerings?

{Oracle}: Takes omen

{Oracle}: optionally performs brief divination for all involved

{Oracle}:

At this time of year, it is traditional for one of the young women of the community to divine the fortune of the community.

{Oracle}: Have one of the young girls draw the card(s) that represent the fortune of the community

13 Calling for the Blessings (Nick)

{Speaker}:

Dažbog, we have made you welcome at our fire, we have honored you, and we have gifted you with offerings. We await your blessings.

{Speaker}:

Bring forth the blessings of the Kindred!

{All}:

Bring forth the blessings of the Kindred!

{Speaker}:

Dažbog has heard your praises, and accepted your offerings.

14 Hallowing the Blessings (Nick)

{Speaker}: Moves to the bilini

Let Dažbog, empower these bilini with his blessings we have heard, and with the fires of the sun to warm us through this season.

Offerings we have given, and an offerings we have been given in return.

Behold the blessings of the Kindred!

15 Affirming the Blessings

*{Assistant passes the plate of bilini around to the participants}:
{Speaker}:

Eat and accept the blessings of the Kindred.

{Speaker}: *Speaks then pauses for a moment.*

Let us reflect a moment on the blessings of the Kindred.

16 Workings

None

17 Thanking the Kindred (Dale)

{Speaker}:

Dažbog, we thank you for sharing our fire, and may your light bring to us the promise of summer to come.

Gods of our people, gods of this place, we thank you for sharing our fire, and may our relationship with you continue to deepen.

Woodland spirits, we thank you for sharing our fire, may you continue to care for the land beneath its blanket of snow.

Ancestors, we thank you for sharing our fire, and may our actions in this world bring honor to you.

18 Closing the Gates (Dale)

{Speaker}:

As our rite draws to a close, we again turn to the Zoryi to assist us in closing the gates.

{Speaker}: *Moves to the well*

Let this gate return to a bowl of water.

{Speaker}: *Moves to the tree*

Let this gate return to wood.

{Speaker}: *Moves to the fire*

Let this gate return to fire.

Let the gates be closed!

{All}:

Let the gates be closed!

19 Thanking the Earth Mother (Mary)

{Speaker}:

We thank the moist mother earth, Mati Syra Zemlya, for always being here and being with us today and in the days to come. When the time comes for melting snow may she keep our plows ready and our fields fertile. May she watch over us, for some of our journeys my find us alone, in a forest with only her moist warm earth beneath us, and her soft sweet voice all around us. We shall always honor and thank her for all she does even when not asked.

Thank you Mati Syra Zemlya.

20 Closing the Rite (Nick)

{Speaker}:

Our celebration has come to an end, but remember the kindred are always with us. As the light comes back to us so should our faith in our and gods and in ourselves, just as they have overcome the darkness, remember so can we. As long as fire burns somewhere there is always hope.

Thank you to all who joined us today. Have a happy Winter Solstice.

End of Rite