

A Winter Solstice Meditation

with more than one person

*A talking meditation triggered by Kathleen Glennon's winter solstice ritual
(‘Heartbeat of the Seasons: Earth Rituals for the Celtic Year’, The Columba Press, Dublin, 2005, p 30f.)*

Preparation : no preparation : the time has simply come

Materials : maybe a candle and matches, maybe not

Chants : no chants this time, no hymn, no dance

Text : passed from one to another to read a paragraph

(italicized parts improvised by any who wish)

Gathering : in a circle, or facing the dawn, hands touching

Here we are together

alone

pausing

pausing

at this solstice moment

of shortest days and longest nights

the nadir of the seasons

the changing of the year

Just ourselves

alone

but recalling good friends

friends who know this moment

friends who celebrate it together

at Pairc an Tobair

at Bru na Cruinne

in Donegal

in Cork

in Antrim

in Portumna

in Dublin

near the Broken Bridge

in Sligo

in Castleblaney

So not just ourselves

not alone

but at one with friends we recall with love

wishing ourselves with them at this moment

hoping they too remember us with love

And not just ourselves and the friends we know
for there are others we do not know
who pause to celebrate this moment
single souls who pause alone
or others who have traveled
who have gathered
who have come together
to greet the dawn at this time of solstice
at Avebury
at Newgrange
at Stonehenge

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At one with these friends
those we know
those we do not know
those who gather at this time
those who pause alone :

we remember our human ancestors who have gone before
thankful especially for ones we knew
who contributed directly to our wellbeing
parents who brought us to birth and who nurtured us
teachers who taught us
friends of childhood and young adulthood

we call to mind the myriad human ancestors we never knew
could never have known
without whom we would not be here
their contributions to who we are now are gifts in the truest sense :
gifts received by us unwittingly
gifts never ever precisely identifiable
gifts never ever fathomable
gifts from donors we will never meet to thank
from donors we will never properly appreciate

and this is a time to consider our larger non-human ancestry
the wider mystery of giving
the work of the more-than-human going back in deep time
that has brought us to this moment today

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this now is a moment for silence
this place may be nowhere special, may be very special
but is ancient place, is sacred, is our space now
this point a namasté point

breathing in we are gifted by all our ancestors
breathing out we make a gift to all who live now

breathing in we are in communion with all the living
breathing out we share ourselves with all who are

breathing in a gifting from all who were
breathing out our gifting to all who will be

this now
the moment for Gaia consciousness
we were born at her breast
we are borne in her embrace
She the mother of the ten thousand things
on whom we depend utterly

breathing in we show dependence
breathing out we share ourselves
breathing in and out
we embody interdependency and experience interdependency

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this now
the moment of our responsibility
to all who lived before us
to all who live now
to all who will live after us

if the air we breath in is polluted	we suffer
if the air we breath out is polluted	others suffer
the air we breath is gift we receive	gift we give

what we are able to do comes from gifts received
what we actually do results in gifts given – for good or ill – to others

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thankfulness to ancestors cannot be expressed to them in words
for they cannot hear what we wish to say
for their ears are long gone

thankfulness to ancestors can be expressed in the things we do now
with silence
with consciousness
for what we do now is our gift for those coming after
for we will be ancestors to those who follow
for our living now and the effects of our living now
accumulate into our ancestral gifting to Gaia